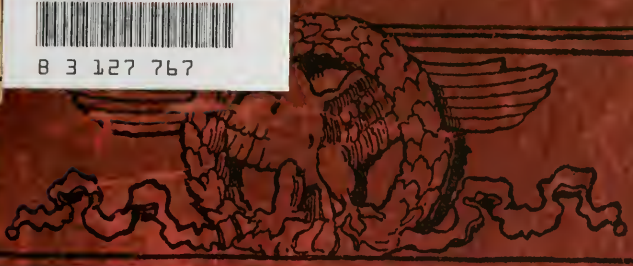
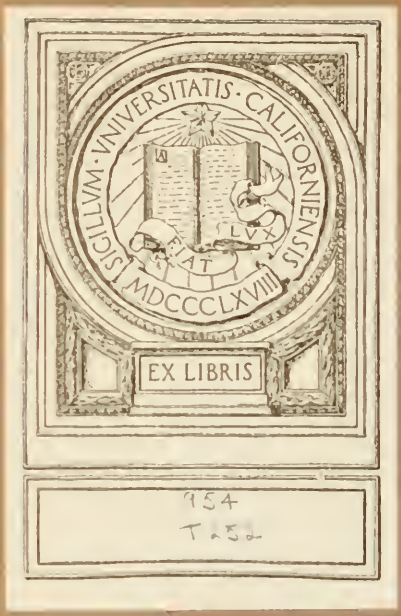
954
T252
UC-NRLF
B 3 127 767



THE IMPERIAL AUTHORITY OF TITUS FLAVIUS


SIGILLVM · VNIVERSITATIS · CALIFORNIENSIS
LVX
FIAT
MDCCCLXVIII
EX LIBRIS
954
T25a

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/metricaldramaofa00tchorich

S·P·Q·R

A METRICAL DRAMA
OF AN ATTEMPT UPON
THE
IMPERIAL AUTHORITY
OF
TITUS FLAVIUS
ELEVENTH CÆSAR
WITH THE TRAGIC FATE OF
CASCA LENTULUS
AND THE
UNHAPPY CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS
ACCUSATION AGAINST
THE EMPRESS LIVIA

BY
ACHIM TCHODJK

NEW YORK
RAVENWOOD & RUTLAND
23RD ST. & LEXINGTON AVE.
1901.

All Rights Reserved.
Copyright 1901, by
Ravenswood & Rutland.
Entered at Stationers' Hall,
London, England,
by
Grant Richards.

To my father.

743136

PROLOGUE.

Upon the great, wide cloth of History,
So surely rolling from the looms of Time;
So laced with life and death and mystery,
Shall condemnation fall if with a rhyme,
Upon a long forgotten spot, we try
To 'broider in sweet Fancy's silken skeins,
To weave a pattern that shall never die,
A deft design where love forever reigns?
But lest the grim historian be wroth,
For him the play-bill bears a line or two,
That he may pick from out the threads of cloth,
The gold brocade, the purple and the blue.
Good friends, with these apologies we ask,
Your kindly favor for both mime and mask.

Descriptive convenience may warrant the employment of the term "unity piece" as a designation for this play, for in its construction the dramatic unities are attempted, the action being entire and taking place upon a single scene within a space of time equivalent to that which would have been occupied by its occurrence in reality.

The minor unities of time and place are complete, which can scarcely be said of any known English play of considerable length. Some centuries ago, the ridiculous contention was made in France that these unities were observed when the scenes of a play were contained within the walls of a building and the elapsed time did not exceed twenty four hours. These bounds, however, proved too galling and it presently became permissible for the scenes to dispose themselves anywhere within the city limits, while the time allowance was increased to thirty hours.

But is this not the other extreme? Is it possible to observe the unity of place at a distance greater than two miles and three furlongs from the city hall? Does not the unity of time demand the denouement within twenty seven hours and fifteen minutes? These are parlous questions.

In availing themselves of these licenses the English dramatists have surrendered the real unity, for in a play in which the scene is shifted, if only to the next room, or the curtain dropped, if for but a moment, the effect of continuity is certainly lost. Indeed, with the curtain once down the modern mind demands a complete change of scene and the supposed passage of no small space of time, for if further incidents are to occur on the same scene or within a brief time it argues want of skill in not including them when the scene was open. Any approximation of these two unities has, therefore, an inartistic effect.

As for the first and far more important unity, that of action; the elusive element of plot, the essential quality of poetry, the inner significance which commands immortality, the virtue

often undreamed of by the temporary and prolific playwright, the very rock of the theatre; it is appropriate to say no more than that though this action may be deemed hurried and involved, the greater unity has been attempted; with what success time alone can determine.

An attempt at complete unity is not open to criticism for; as the supreme expression of the human race is in poetry and the height of poetry is reached in the tragic drama; that execution which embodies the important effect of continuity certainly can not be inferior to a disconnected treatment. Ridicule may be invited by the disparity between desire and ability but the integrity and appositeness of the desire can not be questioned.

A certain freedom has been gained; at the sacrifice of regularity; by the mechanical arrangement of the iambics of the speeches into lines of lengths dictated by the thought to be conveyed, the typographical appearance or the vocal requirements of a reader. A justification of this "symmetric lining," as well as of the division of an iambic between speeches, the use of three syllables in a foot and the transposition of the long and short syllables, is to be found in "The Science of English Verse," by Sidney Lanier, an admirable exposition of the fundamental principles of versification. Although the beauties of the pentametric line be foregone, that broader and more subtle rhythm of style, of which no analysis seems yet to have been made, the hidden rhythm of prose, is not only not surrendered, but is more clearly brought out, for the effect of this method of lining is to facilitate the appreciation of the printed page by decreasing the labor of reading.

Few historical liberties have been taken and the relations between the historical personages are such as are supposed to have existed. The relations between the historical and the invented characters and the incidents arising therefrom are, of course, fictitious; though not improbable.

The action is divided into five parts, analogous to acts, by the second soliloquy of Casca, the first and second soliloquies of Juvenal and the accession of Titus.

New York City,
September, 1901.

Achim Tchodjk.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Given in the order of their appearance on the scene.

NAMES.	*RELATIONS.*	*LINES.*	*AGES.*
‡AULUS CÆCINA,	a Roman General.	160	60
‡DOMITIAN,	afterward the 12th., and last Cæsar.	20	25
TRANQUILLIUS,	a boy, slave to Titus.	37	14
‡PLINY,	the younger, friend of Tacitus.	122	18
CASCA,	half-brother to Livia.	395	22
‡TACITUS,	the historian, friend of Pliny.	118	28
NARCISSA,	friend to Livia.	126	18
LUCIA,	a young girl, slave to Livia.	19	14
LIVIA,	wife of Titus.	359	25
‡TITUS,	the 11th., Cæsar.	345	39
KLABO,	chief slave of the Imperial Palace.	5	50
HYPOKRATES,	a Grecian astrologer.	101	80
‡PLOTINA,	wife of Trajan.	13	27
†GAUDENTIUS,	architect of the Colosseum.	39	50
MARTHA,	wife of Gaudentius.	11	45
‡BERENICE,	wife of Herod and Queen of Cilicia.	184	50
VARRO,	a disloyal soldier.	58	30
‡JUVENAL,	the satirist.	206	60
MONIDES,	archer to Juvenal.		40
†APICIUS,	a glutton.	74	44
‡VESPASIAN,	Emperor of Rome, 10th., Cæsar.	38	69
†JULIA,	wife of Tacitus.	3	22
GALLUS,	conspirators.	5	35
DEMETRIUS,	conspirators.	8	50
GRACCUS,	conspirators.	1	28
‡TRAJAN,	afterward 14th., Emperor of Rome.	62	28
SEXTUS,	a loyal soldier.	78	40
FIRST PLEBIAN,	leaders of the mob.	3	20
SECOND PLEBIAN,	leaders of the mob.	6	50
THIRD PLEBIAN,	leaders of the mob.	14	90
		2616	

Various SOLDIERS and SLAVES and a MOB.

‡Known to have existed. †Believed to have existed.

The Imperial Authority of Titus Flavius.

PLACE:—ROME. YEAR:—79 A. D.

SCENE:—An atrium in the IMPERIAL PALACE OF VESPASIAN. Beyond a colonnade the city is seen on distant hills. In the centre of the scene, somewhat elevated, is the impluvium; a large, round pool of water within a broad stone wall, slightly above the coping of which project the low-oval tops of its six massive equidistant posts. From the panels of the wall between the posts extend stone ledges or seats, with arms, and supporting brackets standing forward, at the ends, upon the flagstone floor. Behind the impluvium; to the right,* flanked by columns; is a wide opening; through the stylobate supporting these and the others of the inner row of colonnade columns; into the corridor, a step higher, running entirely across the rear. Besides the corridor entrances there are two others on each side, below the stylobate. The middle entrances are curtained; the tapestry of the one on the right being drawn, while that of the one on the left is thrown over an immense jar, standing between the entrance and the stylobate. To the right and left of the impluvium, somewhat forward, are two low, small round-tables, from each of which three broad couches radiate.

TIME:—The action extends from the middle of a changeable and stormy Spring afternoon to sunset.

* *The directions "right" and "left" are taken regarding the auditorium, and that portion of the scene nearest the auditorium is herein designated by the words "front", "down", "lower", "forward" and "below"; the antonyms of which are applied to the portion furthest removed; the intervening space being referred to by the words "middle" and "centre", strictly used.*

AULUS CAECINA:

The firſt ſpeaker, being diſcouered belovv the impluvyum by the ryſing curtayn, takes a ſkroll from hys bresſte, and preſentlie ſays to hymſelf, as he unrolles it vvyth delyberation:

Could resolution unallied prevail against
The charging foes of circumstance;
Could resolution drive them back upon their dark retreats,
And sweep the fields of battle clear;
I would not ask for your uncertain aid,
My wrangling and suspicious friends! *He jerks the scroll angrily.*
'Tis bitter that my triumph I must share with thee,
But grateful is the thought that should the veiled hour,
Bring forth misfortune and defeat,
The most respected names in Rome will grace my fall.

He strikes the paper, when, hearing footsteps, he tries to replace it, without success. In alarm he conceals himself below middle right. DOMITIAN enters, upper right, and advances in meditation, counting on his fingers. He discovers TRANQUILLUS following in mimicry and waves him out, when he is presently further disturbed by the sounds of voices on the left.

DOMITIAN.

nth., lyne. A poet's solitude, it doth appear,
Is never sacred to the chatterbox! *Exit, lower left. Enter, upper left, PLINY, followed by CASCA. AULUS envelopes himself in the tapestry.*

PLINY.

No more! No more! I'll hear no more! *Passing through the stylobate opening PLINY turns to CASCA and they gradually move forward*
Thy foul and bloody purpose chills my veins!

CASCA.

We are in Cæsar's house, my friend!
They say the sense of hearing doth pertain
To curtains, jars and even columns here,
That secret passageways do burrow in these rocky hills,
Deep down to silent pits and gloomy caverns, down
To the very jaws of Night herself.

PLINY.

Already, Casca, fearful of the spoken word;
How wilt thou shake when thou hast laid

The Flavians in their reeking tombs,
And swarms of emperors from every camp,
Spring up to claim the throne, and with their veteran legions
Hurry here to Rome from Dacia, Britain, Egypt, Gaul;
On war and bloody mischief bent?

CASCA.

The fire of my ambition, bold,
Will scorch and wither up these green, pretending fools.
Ah, Pliny, when the fateful hour doth come;
I'll loose such thunderbolts of battle and of wrath,
That down the limitless extent of Time's long aisles,
Their echoes shall forever roll.

Enter TACITUS, upper left, his manner showing that he has been a party to the conversation.

TACITUS.

And shall forever echo you a traitor and a thief.

CASCA.

I have as good a right--- *[Dashes in this manner indicate the breaking in of the speech following.]*

TACITUS.

What right have you?

CASCA.

What right has he?

TACITUS.

The right to give us ten years more of peace,
Of happiness, of harvest wealth, of heavy laden vines!

CASCA.

The grapes upon the vine,
Shall they decay and wither when the diadem of Rome
Adorns these destined, fateful brows?

PLINY.

O mad, devoted senator!
O blind and fevered fool!
To what obscure and distant corner
Hath thy reason flown,

That thou wouldst dare this dizzy height
Of Roman grandeur, frowning in the clouds?
Hath the scepter of the empire,
Trembled yet, in old Vespasian's hands?
That venerable, firm and well beloved man first bars your way.

CASCA.

A log; decayed and, Pliny, crumbling; soon removed.

PLINY.

Then stands the mighty oak, my friend and yours,
Strong Titus; he who battered down Jerusalem's walls,
And devastated all the slopes of Palestine;
Think you to measure swords with him?

CASCA.

He saved himself a Jewish queen,
And she hath dulled his edge, whilst their debaucheries
Have filled the Roman heart with dread; they see in him,
A second Nero! Titus doth deserve their hate!
Tiberius, the bloody, 's born again; and vile Caligula,
Reanimate doth walk, when Titus rises from his couch!

PLINY.

Stop! Casca, stop! You know that Berenice lives
In banishment from Rome;
Sent out as Julius Cæsar sent dark Egypt's queen;
And it becomes you not, to thus revive old scandals, Casca;
When the gentle Titus, all mankind's delight;
Who never lets a day go by without a favor done;
When Titus now hath made your sister Livia his honored wife.

CASCA.

His honored wife!
Oh Pliny! Livia was a vestal pure, until,
By magic Grecian arts he won her from her sacred character:
The punishment which ages have decreed against her crime,
Is living burial there beyond the north Collinian gate.
When he is tired of her; and does he not,
Already, keep her hidden weeks and months away;

This doom will end my sister's joy.

PLINY.

When Titus proves himself so base, your hour will then be come;
And Pliny, Flavian admirer that he is, will join your cause.
Till then forbear, for even should you hack this oak to earth,
The younger brother, sly Domitian; timid, crafty, fell Domitian,
He who hides beneath the poet's cloak his wolfish nature,
He, will strike you from behind.

CASCA.

Domitian's days are dropping,
Like the petals of a rose-bud eaten by a worm.

TACITUS.

In plainer words you've hired his murderers. *CASCA objects.*
Will you, yourself, despatch him?

PLINY.

Casca! Thou, a murderer!
Come, clip thy mad Ambition's wings,
And be not tempted to this fearful flight.
The cup of pomp and power,
The intoxicating cup of rule and domination,
Cast from thy eager lips, away;
The draught is death! *From time to time TACITUS writes on a wox tablet, making dots with great rapidity. (The Roman shorthand is said to have consisted of series of points in varying relations.) The sounds of footsteps on the flagstone floor are heard.*
A treasure worth far more to thee,
Than Cæsar's purple or his gold: Narcissa comes.
Enter upper right NARCISSA, presently followed by LUCIA, who is carrying a basket of flowers. Exeunt both upper left without having seen the others, who are down right.

CASCA.

Did I love her as she loves me.... (*Successive periods indicate silence.*)
My life long dreams have been of glory, not of love.

TACITUS.

Do dreams of justice never trouble you?

CASCA.

The Roman law forbids the union of

A bondman's daughter with such blood as mine.

PLINY.

Her father rose to freedom,
She, outshines the noblest ladies of the court;
She lives within your sister's sweet regard,
She hath the emperor's respect despite her unwise love for you;
Remove this stain upon your honor,
Ere Vespasian's willingness to change the law,
Is murdered by your stubborn mood.

CASCA.

Did you persuade me to the other course,
Already had I set me on the throne with you for ministers.

PLINY.

Oh! Casca, look! Oh, look where Livia comes!
The charm of dignity in every movement lies,
She hath the fascination of immortal loveliness....

Enter upper right, LIVIA. She passes across, unconscious of the presence of the others on the scene.

How like a gentle breath she moves along the corridor,
How like a dream her presence makes
The cold and gloomy hallways of this palace seem....

Exit upper left, LIVIA.

She, Casca, is thy sister;
Hers the eyes to blind with tears and burn,
And hers the voice to choke with grief,
And hers the heart to crush beneath thy ruthless heel,
When thou shalt kill Vespasian on his throne,
And lay the noble Titus in his undeserved tomb!

CASCA.

With Titus dying, who could comfort her as well as thou?

CASCA perceives that TACITUS has been writing in shorthand.

You've copied down our conversation, have you not?

TACITUS

I have.

CASCA.

What purpose you?

TACITUS.

It is my habit, thus, to cheat Oblivion of her prey;
By this means I preserve the finely polished sentences,
Which drop complete from Pliny's lips.

CASCA.

You then neglected mine.

TACITUS.

Not so, I put them in.

CASCA.

Then rub them quickly out.

TACITUS.

I'll let them stay; the contrast would be spoilt.

CASCA.

I wish them out; they're safer out.

TACITUS.

They're safe with me. *TACITUS places the tablet in his breast.*
I'll keep the tablet as an evidence,
Of treason and conspiracy, should I be called upon to testify.

CASCA.

Are you against me sir?
The evidence is valueless; whole books of it,
In secret, you could write.

TACITUS.

But this will be supported by the oath of Pliny, here;
A witness not to be despised.

CASCA.

And you against me, where I thought to find,
My chiefest advocate?

PLINY.

I'll never have occasion to substantiate this evidence.

CASCA.

Are you my ally, then?

PLINY.

Nay, not thy ally but thy friend:
Though Tacitus contents himself with evidence,
Against the possibility of trial; more, much more,
Shall I require, to satisfy myself;
So, Casca Lentullus, I warn thee now,
Proceed no further with this dark conspiracy;
Take thou one step and Cæsar takes the next.

CASCA.

Would you betray me, sir?

PLINY.

For nothing less than Rome....

TACITUS.

And now we may discuss more pleasing things.

They start to go out lower right, when NARCISSA enters lower left. CASCA is startled and PLINY bows. TACITUS stands apart.

NARCISSA.

Oh Casca, have you seen a little chicken running hereabout;
A most demure and modest mannered bird.

CASCA.

I see yourself.

NARCISSA.

I mean another one; *Enter, lower left, LUCIA.*
She answers to the name of Livia when you cluck.

CASCA.

Ah, Pliny, here can tell you how,
She just now walked along the corridor.

NARCISSA.

Thanks! Thanks! Just how, I care not since I know she did.

Exit NARCISSA, upper left. LUCIA sits.

LUCIA.

Some day I think she'll stop.

CASCA.

And why?

LUCIA.

You know, I think. *Enter LIVIA, lower left.*

CASCA.

Narcissa seeks you. She hath but this moment gone,
In all her wonted restlessness.

LIVIA.

Left she no word of why she wanted me?

CASCA.

We had no time to ask ere she was out.

LIVIA.

Narcissa, child! Narcissa, child! *LIVIA calls, upper left, where NARCISSA reenters after LIVIA has concealed herself behind the large jar, middle left. LUCIA employs herself with the flowers.*

NARCISSA.

Upon my word, my ears heard Livia call me, twice!

CASCA.

But your bright eyes confirm you no such lies.

NARCISSA.

So Titus hath taught you his knack of rhyme making;
Poor fellow, I know your dear head must be aching.
She pats CASCA'S head.

PLINY.

Not so, gentle lady, he spoke from the heart;
For he's deep in your debt; this was payment in part,
For the falsehood he told as you flew like a dart,
For his was the voice and his mimic art,
Made Livia's tones from 'twixt his lips start.

NARCISSA.

I do not believe it, so call me once more,
To prove that your throat can such sweetness outpour.

PLINY.

The mellowing touch of separation,
Is required to qualify his tones:
Return then to the corridor and he will speak again.

NARCISSA.

I'll hear the mimic cry, right where I stand.

CASCA.

Narcissa, child!

PLINY.

You see the charm is dead,
We'll go and call you from the statue by the pool.

They move forward and to the right after NARCISSA has kissed CASCA.

LIVIA. *Aside.*

Oh could I change this dull, cold jar to Titus,
What a joy 'twould be, for him and me!

She kisses the jar. NARCISSA thereupon discovers her and quickly joins the group, lower right. Exit LIVIA, cunningly, lower left.

NARCISSA.

Come! Come! I'll show you how the mellowing touch
Of separation is required to qualify his tones;
I'll illustrate the magic of his mimic art;
The secret of his charm hides there; no one but Livia herself.

They examine the place and laugh at NARCISSA.

CASCA.

You say this jar is Livia, herself?

PLINY.

This stone, perhaps; or this one; they may serve,
To illustrate your magic mimic art. *To CASCA.*

LIVIA enters, upper left, demurely.

LIVIA.

What interests you so about the jar?

CASCA.

Narcissa claims that you were just now hid behind it;
Or perhaps you were inside.

LIVIA.

How quaint a fancy, that;
To lodge within the precincts of so sensible a head.

NARCISSA.

How quaint a color, that;
To lodge upon the precincts of so red a pair of lips.
How strange! It matches quite an odd, round spot,
Upon this jar.... Oh hypocrites! Most charming hypocrites!
Come tell me now some more about that wondrous,
Mellowing touch of separation, *Words in which the letters are somewhat separated are to be emphasized.*
That peculiar mimic art of thine.
What is't I hear?.... Good friends, who's bit whose tongue?
Lucia, dear! *Exeunt PLINY, TACITUS and CASCA, lower right. NARCISSA whispers to LUCIA. LIVIA sits.*

LIVIA.

Was that quite fair?

NARCISSA.

It was not quite as fair as hiding when we'd made for thee,
A holm oak wreath; and woven it with wild flowers rare;
Such flowers as only spring; they say, from earth that's felt,
A shower of human blood, of victims sacrificed to gods divine.

LIVIA takes the wreath and NARCISSA sits opposite her, on the left end of the impluvium seat. LUCIA watches upper right, where TRANQUILLIUS enters. They converse apart, over the stylobate.

LIVIA.

A dark, strange riddle that so pure a flower,
Should nurture in a soil so terrible.... Oh!

She is hurt by a thorn in the wreath.

NARCISSA.

I did not go to do it, dear: There, there, 'twas not a thorn.
It does not hurt you much. *She moistens LIVIA'S forehead with water from the impluvium.*
Come, come, forget the trifling wound;
I'll let you win a game of hucklebones, I will.
Watch, Lucia, watch!

She produces five small, cubic blocks and they play in the manner of the present-day game of chuckie stones or jacks.

Three, two; you have already won.

LIVIA.

And three more makes me four.

NARCISSA.

In counting thus, I vow the game is made to move

With unaccustomed speed. *LUCIA warns them.*
We'll finish it some other time; you're not much hurt;
For see, here Titus comes, and he hath frowning said,
"This pastime lacks in dignity."
I fear the monster. Come, escape while yet you may!

Exeunt NARCISSA and LUCIA, lower right. TRANQUILLUS vaults the stylobate and follows them out. Enter TITUS, upper right.

TITUS.

Sweet Livia.... Why Livia! My dear!

She remains seated and continues to take no notice of him

What spell prevents the movement of thy lips?

She moves her lips. He betrays amusement but she frowns and he is unable to fathom her mood. He is on the left. She presently speaks.

LIVIA.

You just now spoke?

TITUS.

No! No! I wanted to. I would have asked what magic
Held your lips so firm; from whence this mood,
This coldness, this unusual distance comes?

LIVIA.

You spoke, sweet sir?

TITUS.

Ah, Livia, tell me what I've done, dear;
Leave me not to grope thus in the darkness of your discontent.
Exists there no way out?

LIVIA.

As I am never discontent, there's no way out.

TITUS.

How many hours, then, till the dawn of thy forgiving smiles?
What have I done that I should suffer thus?

LIVIA.

'Tis not so much what you have done, that should provoke me;
It is your neglect and what you've failed to do,
That rouses up the wolf within my breast;
Though I congratulate myself on having,

Singly and alone, o'ercome my temper, so that now,
I say in truth, I never knew myself more lovable.

TITUS perceives that her anger is simulated.

TITUS.

And never showed yourself as little so.
What is't I've failed to do?

LIVIA.

To keep your temper, sir.

TITUS.

I never knew myself more lovable.

LIVIA.

And never looked so black;
Know then, when I just now, most foolishly,
Desired to kiss my husband he was miles away,
And I was then compelled to kiss that jar,
So blackening my lips that they mistook me for a clown:
I thought they'd laugh the very curtains down.

TITUS.

If you had sent me word or had I known----

LIVIA.

A miserable lover thou, to feel no inkling of my pain.
So much did I desire thee that the very air,
Was heavy with my longing:
Thy light heart, was it oppressed!
True love had flown from Egypt even,
Though my wish had trivial been.
If I had sent thee word or hadst thou known.
Break not the humble, innocent, black jar.

TITUS.

Who laughed at thee?

LIVIA.

Nor wreak your poor remorse upon their heads;
They had good cause to laugh,
While you had no excuse for staying hence.

TITUS.

You'll let me black my lips as yours were blacked.
He kisses the jar in front.

LIVIA.

The color comes not off,
The jar hath found you out for what you are.

TITUS.

Am I to blame because my lips have not the sweetness requisite
To melt the very lacquer of the jar?
It sure hath found me out for what I am,
A dull, cold, miserable piece of clay, no better than itself.

LIVIA. *She rises and embraces him.*

You speak the truth for once and I,
I love the truth; I kiss the truth you represent;
Not you, yourself; oh, no, no, no, no! *She kisses him a number of times.*
But you were on some errand; finish it.

TITUS.

I have forgot--

LIVIA.

The truth...

TITUS.

I went to greet our coming guests.

LIVIA.

Then I'll await them here. *TITUS goes up.*

Titus! *He sees that she is reproving him for leaving her without a farewell kiss. He returns, kisses her, and goes out, upper left. She rubs the kiss-spot off the jar.*

Titus, I've concluded now to go.
Exit LIVIA, upper left. AULUS appears from the tapestry.

AULUS.

Oh love sick Titus, vain, contented married man;
I could disturb thy satisfaction by the news,
Of this new hatching plot which Casca sits upon;
But what a shame 'twould be to spoil thy pleasure thus,
And what a blunder in a statesman like myself:
No, Titus, rest thee well, fear not the schemes

Of such weak, timid boys and dread not mine,
For when, as the boastful Casca loves to say,
The fateful moment doth arrive;
The loving kindness of a midnight dagger driven home,
Makes thee a Roman god; a fate thou shouldst invite.
And while I 'wait the hour, I might as well remove
This Casca Lentullus; the time might come,
When I had rather see him in his tomb than in his toga.
Livia: She would bewail the loss of Titus,
Till my throne might shake, so she must bend to my necessity.
I'll spare her life and let her while her time in slavery;
A pleasing slavery. *Enter KLABO, upper right. The scene is darkened by a storm.*
Oh Klabo, come! My mind is troubled by a dream;
The Greek astrologer Hypokrates stands by the palace gate;
Have him brought in to me. *He gives KLABO money.*

KLABO.

It shall be done.

AULUS.

But speak on no account of my infirmity.
Exit KLABO, middle left.
Oh powers divine, 'tis now I feel I am your favored instrument;
The plot you've just compounded in my brain to match
These several ends, I'll put in execution this same hour;
And Casca soon shall be removed by Titus' wrath,
Though Titus will not dream he hatched a plot;
For both shall in this turmoil be confused.
The surface of the water in the impluvium is disturbed by drops of rain. After holding out his hand to feel the rain AULUS moves to a less exposed position on the left. HYPOKRATES enters, middle left.
Hypokrates, a fee, a lordly fee awaits thy claws,
In case the matter which I have in mind,
Is helped along by your vile arts.
Know you on sight the rich patrician, Casca Lentullus.
The senator; whose sister was the vestal Livia?

HYPOKRATES.

I know him well.

AULUS.

And thou art known to him?

HYPOKRATES.

That honor hath not been accorded me.

AULUS.

'Tis well. I see him coming. Here, aside with me,
Till I instruct thee in a part I have for thee to play.

Exeunt AULUS and HYPOKRATES, lower left. Enter, lower right, CASCA.

CASCA.

He stops me with an empty threat.
A boy and yet he blocks Ambition's course,
And thus my overmastering desire is put in leading strings.
A boy! A boy! A boy, indeed!
O speak to Cæsar soon, good Pliny, speak to Cæsar soon.

Enter AULUS, lower left.

Aulus, scarred warrior, good day to thee.

AULUS.

You note my wounds.

CASCA.

To envy them.

AULUS.

And were they yours, what use wouldst make of them?

CASCA.

Hadst thou my youth, what use wouldst make of it?
Hadst thou my wealth, the prestige
Of the name of Lentullus.
My rich patrician blood, my eloquence;
What use wouldst make of them?

AULUS.

I would not idly stand and long for scars;
I would not watch contentedly,
The antics of a country boor upon the Roman throne.

CASCA.

I've known thee for a bitter man,

But now you over-step most dangerous bounds.

AULUS.

Whilst thou dost halt at thy inviting Rubicon.

CASCA.

Misjudge me if you will, and call my caution fear;
But why hidst thou thy meaning in a metaphor?
Have you a soldier's tongue?

AULUS.

I have! And though you hawk to Cæsar what I say,
And bring me back my words,
Transformed to daggers by his anger, yet I'll speak:
I dream of you as emperor; I picture you,
Decked with imperial purple, ruling all the world.

CASCA.

Another counselor like you and I would dream such dreams,
And draw myself such images of pomp and power.

AULUS.

A man of courage need not ask for more than one such counselor.
I was in Spain when Nero died and there I cast my eye about,
And spying worthy Galba, took to him my troops,
And with them victory.
When Otho shortly seized the throne,
I whipped the armies he sent out and made Vitellius emperor.
Vespasian's friends advanced, and at Verona
We came face to face;
I could have crushed them there forever, but
Vitellius had not proven worthy of the purple; I surrendered:
Had I fought;
The proud Vespasian, where would he be now,
Who styles himself "The Favorite of Destiny,"
Who chills at my approach; forgets
That I have made him all he is?
You've now grown up a man and you shall be
My sweeping hand to cuff these Flavian upstarts back,
To the soil from whence they sprang.

CASCA.

Have you no dreams?

AULUS.

I am too old and have too many foes,
It seems that I must be content to give the power;
And take it back.
But Casca, know that I am not alone in this advice;
See, here's a list of men,
Fresh pledged to overcome the Flavian boors;
And all we lack's a man to take their robes.
In midnight councils we have wearily discussed,
And cast about in search of such a man;
At last, despite your youth, on you the choice has fallen;
I have come, their representative, to offer you the leadership,
And finding you so apt---*HYPOKRATES enters, upper left, KLABO pretending to oppose him. KLABO retires.*

HYPOKRATES.

Yea! Yea! I will see Casca Lentullus!
Most noble Casca, I do beg of you, *Kneeling to CASCA.*
Abide my presence and dismiss your friend,
For I have had a vision touching you,
My news comes down from Heaven, straight!

From time to time AULUS and HYPOKRATES craftily congratulate each other on their success in deceiving CASCA.

CASCA.

He is my friend. Proceed.

HYPOKRATES.

As I lay dr aming in my cave last night,
Of old time Grecian grandeur,
Suddenly I felt myself whisked through the air,
And ages passed it seemed; at last,
I found myself upon the edge of some vast plain;
Around it mountains, through it rivers,
While the verdure blessed the eyesight,
And the fragrance of the wildflowers,
With the music of the birds,
So lulled the other master senses,

That, methought I must expire for joy;
And so I would have done
Had not the gods been in a frowning mood,
Which so alloyed the atmosphere that I could live;
For you must know the place was Paradise.
And though I was not bid to speak to you,
Yet from their talk 'twas evident that I have been selected,
To inform the object of their wrath
What reparation he must make to gain their favor
And avert the doom which they in congress have decided on.

CASCA.

Have I been noticed by the gods, have I aroused their anger?
Go impostor! tell your lies to ears more gullible.
Here's what you want, away! *HYPOKRATES refuses the proffered money.*

HYPOKRATES.

I speak the truth.

AULUS.

This wierd astrologer
Hath ever borne a supernatural fame.

HYPOKRATES.

The goddess Vesta rages with the insult offered her,
By Livia's desertion of her sacred temple,
And that foul, unnatural marriage to the tyrant's son.
The other residents of Paradise are scarcely less incensed;
They have decreed that Livia shall answer with her life.

CASCA.

Oh monstrous verdict! Fellow thou art come from Hades, not--

HYPOKRATES.

Let not the hateful uniform of poverty impeach my character;
All men of mystic knowledge, like myself,
Are doomed to wear such rags;
For had we raiment fit to match our occult fame,
Dire consequences would result from our ambitious plots.

CASCA.

Go on.

HYPOKRATES.

They have decreed that Livia shall answer with her life:
That you shall be their instrument,
That you shall offer up your sister, now, a sacrifice to Vesta;
Failing which, she, you and all your family
Shall perish from the earth.

CASCA.

Oh fearful sentence!
Greek, I tell thee thou art come from Hades,
Justice hath her splendid seat on high!

HYPOKRATES.

444 And Justice is offended by thy sister's deed.

CASCA.

The day of human sacrifice in Rome has passed,
The appointed fate for sinning vestals hath for centuries been
A living burial not a bloody sacrifice.

HYPOKRATES.

Her crime is blacker than hath ever been commited by a vestal,
So her punishment with greater horror is decreed.
'Tis time to choose.
You must not bait the gods with indecision.
You must spring, with all the panther's swiftness,
To their work. The deed must be completed
While the sun yet shines above the horizon.
But know that should this edict of the gods
Be manfully obeyed, their favor will be gained,
457 And they will shower whatever gifts
Thou feelst inclined to ask.
'Tis time to choose....

CASCA.

I will obey....

HYPOKRATES.

Your resolution's made; you will not stop for tears,
Nor yet in fear of Titus' power?

CASCA.

The sun shall set upon the execution of this fearful deed;
The gods alone have power to change my will.

HYPOKRATES.

I brought me back from Heaven, sir,
A pair of sacred birds, and they shall guide our course.

Exit HYPOKRATES, middle left, after having been secretly congratulated by AULUS.

AULUS.

It warms my cold, grey heart to see again a man
Who does not hesitate, who rises to the hour;
But let my long experience teach thee now the surest course.

CASCA.

I tremble, Aulus, at my resolution;
Guide me with thy steady hand into the royal port,
And through this storm, and you shall never say:
"He chills at my approach." *TITUS, LIVIA and PLOTINA enter, upper left. AULUS whispers to CASCA.*
I crave thee, Titus,
Livia's company a little while.

TITUS.

If she agrees, I do.

LIVIA.

My brother can not say
My ears were ever cold to his request.

Exeunt TITUS and PLOTINA upper right.

AULUS.

Your brother now hath on his lips
Entreaties which he dreads to utter.
He is dumb because it is become his duty to inform you
Of the threatening dangers hanging o'er our heads.

LIVIA.

My brother!

CASCA.

Aulus will explain, my dear. *He sits.*

HYPOKRATES.

They have decreed that Livia shall answer with her life:
That you shall be their instrument,
That you shall offer up your sister, now, a sacrifice to Vesta;
Failing which, she, you and all your family
Shall perish from the earth.

CASCA.

Oh fearful sentence!
Greek, I tell thee thou art come from Hades,
Justice hath her splendid seat on high!

HYPOKRATES.

444 And Justice is offended by thy sister's deed.

CASCA.

The day of human sacrifice in Rome has passed,
The appointed fate for sinning vestals hath for centuries been
A living burial not a bloody sacrifice.

HYPOKRATES.

Her crime is blacker than hath ever been commited by a vestal,
So her punishment with greater horror is decreed.
'Tis time to choose.
You must not bait the gods with indecision.
You must spring, with all the panther's swiftness,
To their work. The deed must be completed
While the sun yet shines above the horizon.
But know that should this edict of the gods
Be manfully obeyed, their favor will be gained,
457 And they will shower whatever gifts
Thou feelst inclined to ask.
'Tis time to choose....

CASCA.

I will obey....

HYPOKRATES.

Your resolution's made; you will not stop for tears,
Nor yet in fear of Titus' power?

CASCA.

The sun shall set upon the execution of this fearful deed;
The gods alone have power to change my will.

HYPOKRATES.

I brought me back from Heaven, sir,
A pair of sacred birds, and they shall guide our course.

Exit HYPOKRATES, middle left, after having been secretly congratulated by AULUS.

AULUS.

It warms my cold, grey heart to see again a man
Who does not hesitate, who rises to the hour;
But let my long experience teach thee now the surest course.

CASCA.

I tremble, Aulus, at my resolution;
Guide me with thy steady hand into the royal port,
And through this storm, and you shall never say:
"He chills at my approach." *TITUS, LIVIA and PLOTINA enter, upper left. AULUS whispers to CASCA.*
I crave thee, Titus,
Livia's company a little while.

TITUS.

If she agrees, I do.

LIVIA.

My brother can not say
My ears were ever cold to his request.

Exeunt TITUS and PLOTINA upper right.

AULUS.

Your brother now hath on his lips
Entreaties which he dreads to utter.
He is dumb because it is become his duty to inform you
Of the threatening dangers hanging o'er our heads.

LIVIA.

My brother!

CASCA.

Aulus will explain, my dear. *He sits.*

For did you say farewell to Titus privately,
He would persuade you to remain;
And did you go without disguise to Casca's house,
Its doors would fall before thy husband's wrath.
'T is resolution wins the darkest day,
And we three here must sternly act as one.

LIVIA.

Yea, sternly act, if we have courage for it,
Though I fear, I fear a fatal outcome in this course.
There 's yet another risk you know not of.
Will you betray a trust?
You are mistaken if you think that Titus does not fear,
For he fears something, all that it may be I do not know;
He says it is his brother's treachery and violence,
For as you know, Domitian with impatience views the throne.
You have not known that Titus hath an heir.
He 's three months old.
The secret has been closely kept,
My brother, even, knows not of his little nephew Numa,
Who is thought to be some soldier's sport.
You may prevail on me to leave my husband,
But you 'll never come between this boy and me.

CASCA turns toward them.

Oh keep the secret yet!

AULUS.

The good wife of Gaudentius, famed for mother's love,
To her will you entrust the child?
Then have it brought while I am sending out for her.

Exeunt AULUS, lower right, and LIVIA, upper right. NARCISSA approaches CASCA. He is startled.

NARCISSA.

What scheme have you on foot?
What cunning plot hath that old reprobate hatched out?
Be sure that he will prove your friend,
And such a friend the very warmth of his affection
Will suffice for your undoing;

Such a friend as you have been to me.

CASCA.

Narcissa, you misjudge me,
It 's not wise to say a man 's your enemy until he 's dead.

NARCISSA.

And then it matters not.

CASCA.

Believe me, child,
Though I am tardy, I will act the better part.

NARCISSA.

Before you 're dead.
But I will see that Livia is protected
From this aulic craft, as far as I have power.
When she becomes a Christian so will I.

CASCA.

Narcissa, dear, the situation 's delicate, the danger great.

NARCISSA.

Wherever she is taken I will go,
So waste thee no more words.

CASCA.

I may forbid.

NARCISSA.

You threaten me!

CASCA.

I beg your pardon, sweet!
So tender is the peril that I know not what I say.
Believe me, dear, your presence would not
Further Livia's interests while you might destroy us all.
Remain behind and claim from me whatever favor I can grant.

NARCISSA.

Then promise me that Livia from these affairs
Shall finally emerge unharmed.

CASCA.

The pledge is made. She comes! Away with me,
For from this moment you must act a minor part.

Exeunt both, lower left. Enter LIVIA, upper right, carrying an infant. LUCIA follows, and at LIVIA'S direction remains at the rear, keeping a close watch.

LIVIA.

My gentle babe, you smile on me in all my misery.
You could not smile if I were doing wrong;
You could not smile with danger threatening,
Could you now, my love? *GAUDENTIUS enters lower right.*

GAUDENTIUS.

I 've brought the costume which you are to wear.

LIVIA.

Are you a Christian, sir?

GAUDENTIUS.

I try to be.

LIVIA.

Have you no fear in harboring me, of Titus wrath?

GAUDENTIUS.

I am persuaded, Aulus hath said, you have espoused our faith;
That you desire to make your home among the Christians;
Lowly though we be, I trust that none of us
Shall e'er be swerved from duty's path by Cæsar's frown.

LIVIA.

My fears grow less before so brave a man.

GAUDENTIUS.

And may your faith increase. *Enter MARTHA, lower right.*

MARTHA.

You 've sent for me?

GAUDENTIUS.

The Empress Livia hath here a child,
An infant which, for weighty reasons, must remain unknown.
The Spirit hath descended on her head

And she desires to leave the court,
And be with us awhile.
Take you the child. *LIVIA kisses the child and gives it to MARTHA.*
My wife shall not be senseless of the honor,
Nor neglectful of the trust.

LIVIA.

Where shall I see him next?

GAUDENTIUS.

At Pliny's house.

LIVIA.

At Pliny's house!

GAUDENTIUS.

The noble Pliny hath been generous enough
To set apart for me this day some chambers in house,
That of my architectural skill he may
With more minuteness learn;
And there in secrecy you may remain.

LIVIA.

Oh Martha! Martha! He 's my life!

MARTHA.

And he shall be as dear to me as any of my own.

Exit MARTHA, lower right, with the child.

GAUDENTIUS.

And when you call me I 'll be waiting here.

Exit GAUDENTIUS, lower right.

LIVIA.

Oh heavy heart, I feel thee faltering in thy throb;
I feel the darkness stealing on,
But in the twilight I must smile
And seem to be the mirror of the noonday sun.

Enter PLOTINA and TITUS, upper right.

TITUS.

Plotina--- *He wishes it to appear that she has delayed their return.*

PLOTINA.

Titus! Lay the blame right there, *She touches him on the shoulder.*
For I will shoulder none of it as I am not responsible
For your delay. I dragged him back.

LIVIA.

633 I thought as much. A sorry lover, he. *She turns away in tears.*

TITUS.

Your moods would render any lover so.

LIVIA.

A wit!

PLOTINA.

A charming wit!

LIVIA.

A brilliant wit!

PLOTINA.

He hath good points.

LIVIA.

A few.

TITUS.

How much is bid for me?

PLOTINA.

I 'd much prefer a slave from Greece.

LIVIA.

Or even Africa.

PLOTINA.

I am afraid he is not sound.

LIVIA.

644 That 's all he is.

PLOTINA.

Oh then he 's worth, say, ninety nine sestertii.

LIVIA.

I 'll bid a hundred more.

TITUS.

A good sized hog would not be sold for that.

PLOTINA.

But you 're a runt.

LIVIA.

649 Though stockily built.

PLOTINA.

Yes! Yes! But clumsy; still I 'll bid a thousand more.

LIVIA.

Then I will say eleven thousand.

PLOTINA.

I 'll say twenty four.

TITUS.

The market price of runts is mending rapidly.

LIVIA.

When once my mind is set, upon a trifle,
No one lives to thwart my mood;
I 'll bid a hundred thousand times your price.

PLOTINA.

The auction 's not done yet; I 'll go to seek more capital.

Exeunt PLOTINA and LUCIA, upper right. LIVIA embraces TITUS.

LIVIA.

This don 't torment you, Titus?

TITUS.

Ah my love, I would be sold for the smallest part
Of one sestertius and think that no man ever brought
So high a price if you did make the purchase for yourself.

LIVIA.

You love me Titus?

TITUS.

663 Love you----

LIVIA.

Ah I know you do,

But will you always love me so?
Perchance should I at some ill-fated time persuade myself
To find in other occupations more engaging pleasures
Than thy love affords; should I from fear or duty go away;
Will then your love remain as firm as now,
And will our keen-edged happiness endure
The rasp of time; the grit of jealous doubt?

TITUS.

When the sun his orbit leaves,
When day doth follow night no more,
And Night doth reign supreme;
Our love will then burn low.
When all the winds, the gentle winds, the sturdy winds,
The fierce rude winds, have ceased to blow,
The embers of our love will still be bright;
But when a silence vast reigns o'er the earth
And every sound is dead,
And when at last the waves die down
And the restless sea is stilled, then dear,
The last light of our love will sink away.

KLABO enters, upper right.

KLABO.

Your father, sir, upon a point of state,
Desires your counsel ere he comes to dine. *Exit KLABO, upper right.*

LIVIA.

I knew you loved me not, you prove it, quite,
By setting bounds to the illimitable mood.
What hath the sun to do with love?
In twilight are we colder than at noon?
The winds, do we need them to fan our thoughts?
And silence, when are we not envious of every sound
That blurs our lightest whisper?
Whilst the waves, I 've known thee long,
But now I first have learned
The distant sea hath aught to do with our sweet love,
Much less to terminate its amorous course.

No! Titus, no! Think not our love shall ever feel
The touch of hideous death;
In some far happier place
The flame of our immortal passion, bright and clear,
Shall always and forever burn. *They embrace.*
Have faith, my husband, in my love,
And in the darkest hour remember
That my final thought shall always be for you.

TITUS.

The darkest hour shall be
When I have lost one thought of thine.

LIVIA.

Would you deny me pleasure in the child?

TITUS.

Your thoughts for him are thoughts for me.
Ah let us go and see him now.

LIVIA.

No! No! Thou canst not see him now!

TITUS.

And why?

LIVIA.

Thy father waits for thee.

TITUS.

He 'll pardon the delay.

LIVIA.

But Numa is asleep.

TITUS.

I 've looked at him in sleep before.

LIVIA.

But he is nervous, fretful,
And we must not run the risk of waking him.

TITUS.

Well! Well! I think a father cares a little for a child.

But will you always love me so?
Perchance should I at some ill-fated time persuade myself
To find in other occupations more engaging pleasures
Than thy love affords; should I from fear or duty go away;
Will then your love remain as firm as now,
And will our keen-edged happiness endure
The rasp of time; the grit of jealous doubt?

TITUS.

When the sun his orbit leaves,
When day doth follow night no more,
And Night doth reign supreme;
Our love will then burn low.
When all the winds, the gentle winds, the sturdy winds,
The fierce rude winds, have ceased to blow,
The embers of our love will still be bright;
But when a silence vast reigns o'er the earth
And every sound is dead,
And when at last the waves die down
And the restless sea is stilled, then dear,
The last light of our love will sink away.

KLABO enters, upper right.

KLABO.

Your father, sir, upon a point of state,
Desires your counsel ere he comes to dine. *Exit KLABO, upper right.*

LIVIA.

I knew you loved me not, you prove it, quite,
By setting bounds to the illimitable mood.
What hath the sun to do with love?
In twilight are we colder than at noon?
The winds, do we need them to fan our thoughts?
And silence, when are we not envious of every sound

No! Titus, no! Think not our love shall ever
The touch of hideous death;
In some far happier place
The flame of our immortal passion, bright and
Shall always and forever burn. *They en*
Have faith, my husband, in my love,
And in the darkest hour remember
That my final thought shall always be for y

TITUS.

The darkest hour shall be
When I have lost one thought of thine.

LIVIA.

Would you deny me pleasure in the child?

TITUS.

Your thoughts for him are thoughts for m
Ah let us go and see him now.

LIVIA.

No! No! Thou canst not see him now!

TITUS.

And

LIVIA.

Thy father waits for thee.

TITUS.

He 'll pardon the d

LIVIA.

But Numa is asleep.

TITUS.

I 've looked at him in sleep

LIVIA.

But he is nervous, fretful,

LIVIA.

You hurt me Titus; love, you do. *They embrace. Exit TITUS, upper right. BERENICE appears on the left, from behind the stylobate, having entered through an opening invisible to the audience.*

Farewell, my love! Farewell, my love!
Was ever prospect fair so clouded over,
Changed so in a moment, thus,
To gloomy night and blinding mist?

BERENICE.

Unfaithful Titus! Still another victim to thy cold caprice.

Exit LIVIA, middle right. Enter CASCA, lower left.

CASCA.

'T is Berenice! How have you returned to Rome?

She places her right hand across her brow and quickly removes it, in a peculiar and noticeable though natural manner. CASCA makes a similar motion.

BERENICE.

Then you are in the plot.

CASCA.

How came you to this room?

BERENICE.

I know these passageways as well as thou the streets of Rome.

CASCA.

You run grave risks and have not much to gain.

BERENICE.

I risk no more than you, I gain no less.
But I 'd have thought thee satisfied to have the Flavians stay;
Can Aulus make a better emperor, for you, than one of them?

With an effort CASCA conceals his suprise at this revelation of the duplicity of AULUS.

CASCA.

Do you expect to be his queen?

BERENICE.

When Aulus sits upon the throne, I sit upon his knee.

CASCA.

You care but little for the forms of dignity.

BERENICE.

736 An empress is above reproach.

CASCA.

To be his empress came you here?

BERENICE.

He 's rather old.

CASCA.

Then make your best speed to Cilicia's bounds again;
I kill the hope, for like a schoolboy I 've been tricked,
And like a schoolboy I will trick again.
Until this moment I have thought that I had been selected
As emperor to be. Conspire no more!

BERENICE.

744 Tell Titus will you! Wait!
Each one of us is for himself;
Though once I thought a bit of thee.

CASCA.

A thought it did remain.

BERENICE.

It might come back;
Would you not make a better emperor than Aulus, man!

CASCA.

He said as much.

BERENICE.

You 'd make a finer figure on the throne.

CASCA.

And have a fatter knee.

BERENICE.

753 A knee 's a knee.
I thought a great deal of you once.

CASCA.

Plot on.

BERENICE.

If Titus wants me back,
The first conspirator who takes a step
Shall stumble to the ground; if not below.
If Titus still remains a rock,
We 'll make old Aulus emperor to gratify his pride;
A day of haughtiness shall do for him, a single day.

CASCA.

And when we kill him for his crimes,
We 'll be applauded by the crowd. This plan must be the one.

BERENICE.

Though not if Titus takes me back.

CASCA.

You know that he 's a married man.

BERENICE.

His wife!

CASCA.

My sister.

BERENICE.

You 've no sister out of childhood.

CASCA.

Livia, the vestal.

BERENICE.

Married, do you say, and secretly?
He 'll tire of her.

CASCA.

In time.

BERENICE.

He must! Today!
Attack her character.

CASCA.

My sister!

BERENICE.

Dost thou think that she will place
The robes of state on you,
And see her husband unprotected, and herself despised?

CASCA.

She dies today ere sunset. Klabo! *A loud and sudden call.*
Hide! *BERENICE conceals herself on the left. Enter KLABO, upper right.*
Did you allow Hypokrates to enter from the street
When he came in?
I know that he and Aulus had been talking
Long together just before he came to me.
I only wish you to confirm my knowledge of the fact.

KLABO.

Your confirmation, sir, must come from other sources,
For Hypokrates had not been seen by Aulus when I let him in.

CASCA.

Ask Tacitus to presently come here; and Varro too.
Exit KLABO, upper right. BERENICE reappears.
I am commanded by the greater powers to offer Livia a sacrifice,
The message coming through Hypokrates;
I feared that Aulus might have plotted that.

BERENICE.

He would not dare, the sacrilege would be too great.

CASCA.

He has arranged a guard for her!
He thinks to cheat the gods, to steal her from my vengeance for
His hateful purposes. I, too, will have a body of retainers ready
When she leaves the palace gate.

BERENICE.

She is to leave?

CASCA.

Pretending to become a Christian,
So that Titus' wrath may fall on them,
Thus giving me an opportunity to execute the deed.

BERENICE.

To put the blame upon the Christians, ah!
Why, let it fall upon some enemy of yours;
Let Titus think she goes to him;
And then he will not grieve and mope for her.

CASCA.

On Pliny's head, for he opposes us.

BERENICE.

She 'll go?

CASCA.

We 've made her fear the mob.

BERENICE.

She 's very apt to turn and face its violence,
If she hath metal in her like your own.
Stay! Have her think that I am here at Titus' wish,
That he, unfaithful to his vows, hath called me back again.

CASCA.

If she doth falter, it shall then be done.

BERENICE.

A loving woman does not lightly leave her husband's house.

CASCA.

We 'll have some proof; write on this plate:
"You are commanded, Casca Lentullus,
To execute your sister with the rites prescribed by fate."

BERENICE.

And forge the name of Titus Flavius.

CASCA.

No! We 'll let him sign it for himself,
And then I think that she will go.

Exit BERENICE, lower left. Enter TRANQUILLIUS, upper right.

TRANQUILLIUS.

Who 's the old woman, there?

CASCA.

Your mother, it is said.

TRANQUILLIUS.

Then we are brothers, sire.

CASCA.

823 The honor 's yours.

TRANQUILLIUS.

I fear your generosity will spoil your temper, sire.

TRANQUILLIUS seats himself at the right, on the bundle which GAUDENTIUS has left.

CASCA.

I 've not that quality.

TRANQUILLIUS.

Temper, sire; or generosity? Are both entirely gone?
Did that old woman take a bundle off?

CASCA.

Why so?

TRANQUILLIUS.

I have been sent to get a bundle here; I see it not.

CASCA.

No?

TRANQUILLIUS.

No?

CASCA.

No.

TRANQUILLIUS.

No!

CASCA.

No!

TRANQUILLIUS.

No!

CASCA.

No!

TRANQUILLIUS.

Oh! *He discovers the bundle.*

CASCA.

Oh!

Exit TRANQUILLIUS and enter LIVIA, upper right.

LIVIA.

I will not go! Send quickly, bring Gaudentius back,
He took a treasure from me. Send! Oh! Send, for him!
CASCA refuses.
'T was wrong to think of going and I happily see again
The light of reason ere it is too late.

CASCA.

You 've been persuaded; you have told.

LIVIA.

My heart alone hath been my counselor.

CASCA.

Your judgement, what of that?

LIVIA.

I have no judgement and I want no judgement
Which will coldly come between my love and me.

CASCA.

Rush on to your destruction for the weak indulgence of an hour.

LIVIA.

I need advice; alone I can not know what 's best,
And whether I should disregard the promptings of my heart
I 'll not be satisfied to go without advice;
Let 's leave it to some judge, a man unbiassed,
Why not Trajan, Pliny, Juvenal or Tacitus?

CASCA.

Say Juvenal, as he 's the oldest of the lot.

LIVIA.

I 'll to him, straight. *Exit LIVIA, upper left.*

The fecond foliloquie of Cafca Lentullus.

I stand upon the parting ways;
I stand between the roads to happiness and fame;
I stand between inaction and the mastery
Of circumstance; between this fearful impulse
And the peaceful conduct of the full, unsullied heart.
With honor may I save the day for Titus,
For I 've gone to lengths no further
Than are warranted in seeking out conspiracy;
With vigor I may seize the throne,
And occupy that splendid summit
Which inspires the universe with envy and alarm.
I hesitate to catch the challenge up
By Fate thrown flaunting down;
I cringe, a creature of her will, a thing of mere caprice.
O mocking Fate! Come try thy wrath on me,
Bring forth thy proofs, condemn me to inaction
If thou canst; come show me who is master,
Who shall rule the great ambition coursing in my veins!
Come to the conflict armed in all thy might,
For thou hast now an adversary fit to try thy skill.

Enter NARCISSA, lower left. The approach of TITUS causes her to retire without discovering herself to CASCA. Her presence is a premonition.

Enter TITUS, upper right.

I seek you, sir! I have the worst of news.

TITUS.

A little time may wear it out.

CASCA.

Doth time wear out illicit love?
Doth time abate conspiracy?

TITUS.

You broach most serious subjects, Casca.

CASCA.

Seriously must they be met.

TITUS.

Conspiracies by scores are laid but few are ever hatched.

CASCA.

Intrigues by scores are carried on, and guilt and acquiescence
Flourish on the food of love but few are ever barred
Against the judgement seat of public scorn.

TITUS.

Should this touch me?

CASCA.

Thy father's throne is threatened by conspiracy;
Old Aulus leads the malcontents;
Thy house is robbed already of its joy,
For Pliny, graceful, polished Pliny, loves the empress;
Loves her with a passion long concealed but not denied.

TITUS.

Her brother!

CASCA.

No one else hath dared.

TITUS.

Proofs! Proofs! From even thee!

CASCA.

Conceal thy motive; read the words of Pliny's mouth.

Enter TACITUS, upper right.

I've tried in vain to recollect that pretty speech of Pliny's;
Which Titus hath desired to hear. Give him the lines.

TACITUS.

I would not have an adept like the future emperor
Compare these straggling dots of mine
With his perfection in the art.

TITUS.

The speech!

TACITUS.

He takes the tablet from his breast and reads.

"Oh! Casca, look! Oh, look where Livia comes!
The charm of dignity in every movement lies,
She hath the fascination of immortal loveliness.
How like a gentle breath she moves along the corridor.
How like a dream her presence makes
The cold and gloomy hallways of this palace seem.
She, Casca, is thy sister-" *He stops.*

TITUS.

Read on!

TACITUS.

The rest is of but little moment, sir.

TITUS.

Read on!

TACITUS.

I've reached a part I do not care to read.

TITUS.

You've reached a part I wish to hear.

TACITUS.

I'd break a confidence by reading further, sir;
The matter does not signify the least.

TITUS.

Read on!

TACITUS.

I would regret to disobey thy last command.

CASCA.

No doubt it is a trivial thing that Tacitus conceals;
Perhaps within an hour he might be glad to read the rest.

TITUS.

I would not run the risk of losing what is left.

TACITUS.

I 'll leave the tablet here upon the ledge.

CASCA.

To clinch the truth with evidence let Titus sign the plate.

TITUS.

Indeed my confidence in you doth not need that.

TACITUS.

But certain knowledge is a more substantial crown
For confidence than any halo of belief, however bright.

TITUS.

Mine, too, shall then be crowned.

TITUS throws his robe over the written portion of the tablet so that TACITUS may be sure that he does not read any of it while signing.

CASCA.

Another tablet for your signature.

TACITUS places his tablet on a ledge, down right, and goes out. TITUS signs CASCA'S tablet; the order for LIVIA'S death.

What think you now, is 't proof enough,
Or will you have some more?

TITUS.

Go on?

CASCA.

They have arranged for her to leave the palace in an hour.

TITUS.

I think she may, but under guard.

CASCA.

Control thyself! I 'll have my spies see where she goes,
And take her into custody
When she has reached the meeting place.

Let not this private grief, though,
Blind you to the danger of the forming plot,
For this is only Pliny's share; the throne is envied, too.

TITUS.

Oh! What care I for that if she is gone?

CASCA.

It gives you power to punish her.

TITUS.

I will inform my father of the danger; he
Can cope with that. Instruct the spies.

Exit TITUS, upper right. Enter VARRO, lower right.

CASCA.

The empress leaves the palace gate within an hour.
She wears the Christian garb.
Remove her to the house of Marius Germanicus
Despite whatever opposition you may meet.
By this way: Livia comes!

Exit VARRO, lower right. Enter LIVIA and JUVENAL, upper left.

LIVIA.

Now Casca, thou art shown at fault,
For Juvenal, in his wisdom, hath confirmed my fears.

CASCA.

You think it best for her to stay?

JUVENAL.

To me there seems no need for all this haste.

CASCA.

Have you determined now to break your word with us?

LIVIA.

I have decided not to go.

CASCA.

And she hath told thee all the reasons for the plan?

JUVENAL.

I trust my reputation hath not yet been sullied

By a judgement rashly given,
Though there may be facts in this which we have yet to learn.

CASCA.

There are! Once more, I ask you, will you go?

LIVIA.

I have determined not to go.

CASCA.

Then stay and meet your death!
For since you pierce my subterfuge, the truth must be revealed;
The Jewess hath returned and Titus loves her still,
A fatal order hath been signed,
And I must be your executioner.

JUVENAL.

Unnatural man!

CASCA.

Things willed by Cæsar must be done.
The awful cost of disobedience would be in vain;
Go then, before the order reaches me.

JUVENAL.

You know?

CASCA.

I saw her write the tablet, sir!
Their plot is this: To the feast she comes,
And all of them will laugh her off;
She presently returns, and some laugh not;
A messenger comes in with news of rising discontent
Against the virgin hidden here, thyself!
The Jewess stands there waiting and a place is made for her.

Enter MONIDES, upper left.

LIVIA.

I 'll go ere she returns.

CASCA.

Put on the garb; collect thy trinkets for the time is short.

Exit LIVIA, upper right. CASCA sits apart.

JUVENAL.

Well Monides? Yes! Yes! I sent for you.
We have arranged a pleasantry
With one of Rome's voracious eaters;
When I send for you a little while from now,
Bring in what game you've shot, upon a hunt in which
'T will be supposed you'll be engaged.
Arrange it so that you shall bring no game with you
Except a crow. Shoot me a crow and bring it back.

Exit MONIDES, lower left. Enter PLINY and APICIUS upper right, where all the banqueters presently enter as occasion dictates.

PLINY.

Apicius, I am told, that in consideration of your noted appetite,
The emperor hath said you shall be served a double course.

APICIUS.

A double course! A double course!
Thou mockst my hunger, Pliny, with such news.
For ten long years have I intrigued
With Aulus, Klabo, even Julia and Plotina,
That Vespasian might relax his discipline
And give me more to eat when I'm his guest.
Today, they said he had relented;
Now you say he has decreed a double portion!

JUVENAL.

While you wanted double that.

APICIUS.

My most self-sacrificing suit was for
A full quadruple course at least.
Expecting that, I have not swallowed food today,
For two long hours, and now you say a double course!

JUVENAL.

Poor, famine stricken wretch. *CASCA rises.*

APICIUS.

Yes! Yes! 't 'as been two hours, and then I only ate
A dozen Martian apples and a little quart of Massic wine;

PLINY.

Nay! It is the Christians and the Jews, and not the Jews alone,
Who break the peace.

JULIA.

But how are they opposed?

JUVENAL.

The matter, I am told, is a culinary difference,
The Christians liking their fruit whole,
The Jews preferring theirs, particularly apples, nicely peeled.

APICIUS.

Let us discuss the meal and not the Jews; the dice!

TRANQUILLUS enters with a cup of dice for each table. The guests throw in rotation, beginning on the left.

TITUS.

Christianity 's a baleful superstition,
Newly spread from Palestine.

DOMITIAN.

And it deserves a careful scrutiny;
'T is said the Christians with their gods
Deny to other people theirs. We 'll watch them close.

JUVENAL.

They are your enemies indeed,
For Christian is as poor in rhymes as one of them in goods,
While Jew will rhyme with screw and shoe and slew and few,
And you can hew your poem through
And glue your name to fame,
With forty rhymes for Jew still left in view.

APICIUS.

I think that every man should have his individual god.

JUVENAL.

And I maintain that every god should have his individual man.
That is, if men are found, enough to go around.

DOMITIAN.

It seems to me that every fool should have his individual cage.

JUVENAL.

And each and every poet grand should have his individual pen.
I've won the throw!

APICIUS.

And luck has favored me;
Now, Juvenal, throw; and see who 'll be the master of the feast!

JUVENAL.

Sweet Venus is my throw.

APICIUS.

And aces, mine. *They laugh at him.*

VESPASIAN.

Now, Juvenal, propose the order of the meal.

JUVENAL.

Bring on the light and airy Setine wine.

APICIUS.

But first the pumice stone to whet our throats,
And then Falernian wine; this Setine kind is sweetened oil,
The other 's rich and red.

JUVENAL.

Sour blood, gross appetite!

APICIUS.

This chicken-livered cynic has a cobweb throat.

JUVENAL.

With a velvet palate.

APICIUS.

And a thimble-sized interior.

JUVENAL.

But I thank the gods that my exterior
Hath never yet got in my way.

APICIUS.

'T is a gastronomic honor, sir

It shows I always know what good food is.

JUVENAL.

And always shows you never know when you have had enough.

APICIUS.

Its capacity 's its boast and pride.

VESPASIAN.

He can not know when he has had enough,
He lies unconscious then.

APICIUS.

Its capacity 's its boast and pride.

JUVENAL.

Ho! ho! How much say, doth it hold?

APICIUS.

Immeasurable quantities.

JUVENAL.

How much?

APICIUS.

How much, say you, it will refuse to hold?

JUVENAL.

I have an honest archer, Monides, now on a hunt;
I 'll wager you that he brings with him back
More game than you can stomach in a week.

APICIUS.

I gladly take your bet; of what amount?

JUVENAL.

A thousand new sestertii.

APICIUS.

A thousand---new sestertii.

VESPASIAN.

Let 's drink to the choice of the gods.

They drink, the wine having been brought by KLABO. VESPASIAN lets the wine spout from the small end of his horn through the air into his mouth. JUVENAL alone, follows his example.

Come, Tacitus, to start the feast,
Bring on your promised dish
And see how it will turn our tongues against the meal.

TACITUS motions to KLABO, who brings in a veiled urn, putting it on the left table. JULIA unveils it.

TACITUS.

Within that urn, my friends, is all that 's left
Of one whose name has made the bravest of you tremble;
One whose lightest whim might end forever
Love and hope with life itself.
Proud, wilful, bloody, jealous Nero,
That 's the sum of all your tyrannies,
That 's the crown you 'll wear until the end of time itself.

VESPASIAN.

You say 't is Nero's dust?

TACITUS.

He, even he, left friends;
They spirited away the urn for fear some desperate soul,
Dishonored by the monster, should in frenzy
Cast upon the winds his hated ashes; they
Succumbed before the hour of safety had returned;
A will was brought to me in the usual course of law,
And thus I 'm made the guardian to carry back
This dust unto its sepulchre;
I! I! Whose brother died at his command.
And my weak, long delayed revenge
Must satisfy itself in making him,
The once supreme and mighty ruler of the world,
The small talk of our meal.

APICIUS.

He was a tyrant, at his board
I left my fresh, young, strong digestion;
Give me that again and take ten years of life.

JUVENAL.

He took from me my actor Paris!
How, in my old age, can I expect to find

Another subject for a satire, such as he?
I've nothing now to rail against but gluttony and theft,
Dishonesty and husband poisoning and greed and lust and lies,
And such minute discrepancies; so Nero,
Take a dozen years and give me back my actor, rank!

NARCISSA grasps the urn. AULUS rises and after putting a powder into a bowl of wine which KLABO has on a tray, returns to his place.

NARCISSA.

Ah, avaricious claw, what hast thou done
With all my father's gold?
Four hundred millions of sestertii
Thou filched from my inheritance and left me none;
A score of years for such a hill of gold I'd give.

TITUS.

And I as much if he'll bring back my friend Britannicus,
Whose death he managed with the vile Locusta's deadly draft.
Oh Nero! hath the world a friend to offer any man,
To match Britannicus?

TACITUS.

Another life is offered thee, why Nero, dost thou hesitate?

JUVENAL.

'Tis foolish, sirs, to think a man who never did a favor,
Will begin the practice, now he's dead.

TITUS.

My friends, I've lost a day!
What favor have I granted since the sun came up?
Not one? Here's Nero's dust, I'll favor it,
And we who jeer at him, once more will do him reverence.
A drink to Nero's dust!

JUVENAL.

And let us drink, as the emperor and myself are wont to do,
In this time honored custom, friends.

They drink, but only JUVENAL and VESPASIAN spout the wine from the small end of the horn. LIVIA embraces LUCIA, refusing the wine. Enter BERENICE, lower left. Down right TRANQUILLUS is holding a cake, which he regards with envy.

VESPASIAN.

Simplicity is dead in these degenerate days,
And ancient vigor, sapped by luxury,
Consumes itself in idleness and vanity.

BERENICE.

Friends, give me to drink;
I learned that ancient art in Alexandria.

The banqueters rise on their hands. LIVIA, LUCIA, JULIA and TITUS stand. BERENICE extends her hand in vain.

1161 Is this your far-famed Flavian hospitality?
Why not a farmhouse on my way from Greece
Hath held aloof with such ungraciousness as thine.

TACITUS.

Ah, Berenice, Jewess grand--and agéd--think you
We are farmers to be played upon?

BERENICE.

Contemptuous Tacitus, of all the men I 've met
Since I last dined within these portals, none
Hath equalled thy injustice to my race.

PLINY.

1169 Sweet Berenice, which hath had
The intellect to pierce thy siren's charms?

BERENICE.

This boy, who 's he?

TACITUS.

This venerable dame;
We 'll have our fortunes told and let her go.

Enter TRAJAN, upper left. At a motion from VESPASIAN he takes his place.

BERENICE.

Oh Titus! hath the day not been when jibes like these,
Would echo in the dungeons of the Mamertine?
You loved me then, and now you stand and see me jeered.
Time was when feasting waited on a mood of mine;
1178 And now, here Trajan, this young man, not long ago
A soldier rough from Spain, unpolished and uncouth,

He sits him down with emperors and I stand pleading,
Not for love or friendship, merely for a place with you,
That I may humbly listen to the accents,
Once poured out to me in passionate promises and vows.

TITUS.

You come without an invitation,
Nay, a banished and forbidden guest you come;
And so you stand.
You come because you hope to throw o'er me again
The spell you exercized so long;
But Berenice, know that I have risen
High above that base infatuation,
Know that Titus rules himself again,
And haste thee back to thy Cilician kinglet,
Ere thy sister steals the fellow from thy arms.

BERENICE.

You lightly cast the seeds of scorn,
But heavily shall you reap the harvest of revenge.
This Livia; will the common herd of Rome
Fall down in adoration when it 's fully known
That you have taken from the temple for your lust
A vestal pure? Rouse not their wrath,
But let our old time friendship spring again.

APICIUS rises and approaches her. She is facing the right and he goes behind her and pretends to speak secretly.

APICIUS.

Oh I should like to take his place, fair Jew!

BERENICE slaps him in the face. A general laugh.

JUVENAL.

Oh ho! Apicius! tell us now, where you have ever found
A finer, warmer flavored dish than that?
Apicius, come! extol the Berenician digits!
Tell us all, the nature of the condiment, or possibly 'tis meat?
And rivals both the Kentish oyster and the Melian crane;
Exceeds the flavor of the nightingale,
And makes the taste of peacocks hearts as flat as that!

APICIUS.

I did mistake a physic for a feast. *He returns to his place.*

BERENICE.

There is a place, between a young fool and an older one,
And even there I'd sit. *Between PLINY and TACITUS.*

TACITUS.

And throw the glamour of thy middle age upon the group.

BERENICE.

Oh Titus! should I tell you that conspiracy
Hath reared its hateful head again,
That men here drinking of your wine,
Will presently be drinking of your blood,
And I could save you, would you take me back?

TITUS.

'Tis ninety eight conspiracies, if I remember,
Sometimes two a day, you've saved me from;
Your old time generosity in that respect
Seems with you still.

BERENICE.

I had sharp eyes for thee;
No plot did ever take such root, when I was loved,
Or spring such mighty branches
As the one whose growing shadow soon shall prove thy night.

TITUS.

A welcome darkness if it happily hides thy smile.
TRANQUILLIUS grandly bows her to the entrance.

BERENICE.

Beware thee Titus, of the swift resentment of discarded love.

TITUS. *To KLABO, only LIVIA and LUCIA being near enough to catch his words.*

Detain her for a private interview.
Exit BERENICE, lower left. APICIUS spits after her.
Conspirators, if you be here,
Look in my father's face and ask yourselves
If he hath not a kindly domination held?

Conspirators, look in his face,
And hesitate before you strike the faithful steward;
Think before you plunge your country into civil war,
And think before you place yourselves in opposition
To the mighty hand that still rules Rome.
I think you all are friends;
I see no face that augurs mischief, here;
I think the Jewess spoke from spite,
I'm sure she did. We'll prove it! here, an oath!
By Nero's ashes and my father's head,
That you are loyal to our rule!

All at the left table, except VESPASIAN, put out their hands

A GENERAL SPEECH.

Long live Vespasian, emperor!

TITUS.

And here! *He places the urn on the right table and all put out their hands, except LUCIA and LIVIA*

Your hand's unmoved.

LIVIA.

And so it shall remain.

TITUS.

Your brother, here----

LIVIA.

Forgets his father's death.

TITUS.

You will not swear you're loyal----

LIVIA.

Not by Nero's ashes.

TITUS.

By the gods.

LIVIA.

Nor yet by them;
I'll swear no more by pagan gods or mortal dust,
For I am now become a Christian. *They all stand*

TITUS.

Thou a Christian!

LIVIA.

Yea, a Christian, Titus,

She removes her white tunica-pallium, appearing in a black robe.

I am done with courts and splendid pomp,
And luxury and sin. Gaudentius, come! *He enters, lower right.*
This worthy man will henceforth be my teacher and my guide.

TITUS.

What folly sir, is this?
You know that we have overlooked your superstitious worship,
For the sake of your great art, but now you step too far;
We will permit you yet to leave our presence,
But our wife remains.

LIVIA.

We go together.

TITUS.

Livia, tell me when I've given thee cause to leave thy home;
Have I been harsh, have I been faithless, cold or distant?
When have I denied thee any pleasure that the empire holds?
And who could love thee with a deeper passion
Than the one which burns in me?

LIVIA.

I love thee still. *She turns to GAUDENTIUS with a gesture of appeal.*

GAUDENTIUS.

But her Redeemer's voice is heard.

TITUS.

Invoke thy slimy magic now,
And see if it prevails against the Roman sword.

TITUS motions and a number of soldiers, led by SEXTUS, enter, middle left. CASCA approaches TITUS.

Arrest the man and watch the woman,
Lest by occult practices they spirit her away.

CASCA. *To TITUS.*

You hold her and destroy all evidence; I've posted guards!

VESPASIAN.

The soldiers retire at his gesture.

My son, allow them to depart in peace;
I've dreaded long the mischief which might come to us
Through this unnatural woman. Think yourself well rid of her.

TITUS.

I want to save her from her own intended folly,
Even though her love I seemingly have lost.

Exit GALDENTIUS, lower right. AULUS in trying to speak to LIVIA privately, is seen by TITUS.

I saw your signal!

Livia! *She perceives that he reproaches her for not executing their customary arrest. She turns and kisses him.*

LIVIA.

Oh think no more of this
Than of a journey to my mother's house!
Turn not your heart against me, Titus,
Think you I would leave you thus, without a cause?
And think you it shall be for all time; no, no, no!
You'll love me still, you'll love me always
And the happy days shall come again;
The happy days shall come again.

Exit LIVIA, lower right. VESPASIAN groans.

VESPASIAN.

My drink's been drugged! Assist me hence!
I'll be a god myself in half an hour,
If they can't ease this pain.

TITUS summons soldiers who enter on the left, led by VARRO and SEXTUS. Exeunt DEMETRIUS, GALLUS and GRACCUS hurriedly lower left. AULUS is arrested. VESPASIAN surrounded by guests moves to the right.

TITUS.

Now, Aulus, we shall know the meaning of that signal,
And the reason for this poison mixing.

Exit AULUS in custody, middle left, followed by TRAJAN and SEXTUS. TITUS prepares a drink with a powder from a ring, taking water from the impluvium

Go! Tranquillius, bring physicians, quickly! Here is some relief.

Exit TRANQUILLIUS at the top of his speed, upper right. TITUS gives his father the drink which he has prepared.

VESPASIAN.

Oh take me to my Sabine home, for there I shall be safe;

The oracles have said I am to die in Rome.

Exeunt VESPASIAN, PLINY and TACITUS, upper right. The women are gathered about that entrance. Enter TRAJAN, middle left, followed by SEXTUS carrying a roll of papers.

TRAJAN.

These papers have been found on Aulus' person.

TITUS. *SEXTUS hands him the papers.*

Thou hast proved thyself my friend.
A speech to be delivered to the guards.
The Prætorians here are promised heavy sums,
When Aulus sits upon my father's throne.
The Jewess knew!
We're tangled in the toils of some wide-spread conspiracy.
Go !Trajan, go! Divide the guards!
Some to the palace here, some to patrol the streets!
First! have Aulus executed, where he stands.

A silence. Exit SEXTUS, middle left. TITUS reads the second paper. The footfalls of SEXTUS and the rattle of the parchment are the only sounds. Presently a loud cry from AULUS, within; then a brief silence, broken by the sound of a falling body. Exeunt the women, upper right. Re-enter SEXTUS, middle left. Exit TRAJAN, upper left.

A roll of traitors names; of men esteemed our friends.
To the deepest dungeons of the Mamertine,
With the last name listed here.

Exeunt JUVENAL, DOMITIAN and KLABO, upper right. Enter GAUDENTIUS, disordered, lower right.

GAUDENTIUS.

Oh Cæsar! they have dragged thy wife away!
Outside the palace gates, two crowds set on with clubs
And bruised me thus, while she was carried off.

TITUS.

Come Sextus, come, with all our speed to Livia's rescue.
Thou, Gaudentius, guide us as thou lovest thy life.
Is Aulus dead? *SEXTUS shows his bloody sword.*
You, Casca, take command of all our forces here.
Our father must be guarded on his way.
We leave the list with you.

Exeunt, lower right, all except TITUS, CASCA, VARRO and a few soldiers.

Add Pliny's name. *Exit TITUS, lower right.*

CASCA.

Before you take these prisoners
To the Mamertine bring each one here to me.
Wait Varro! bring me Gallus and Demetrius and Graccus first.

Exit VARRO, upper left, followed by CASCA. Enter TRANQUILLIUS, upper right. With great circumspection he proceeds to the left table and is about to pick up the cake which he has admired when APICIUS enters, middle right, in search of food. They are mutually startled and disgusted on discovering each other.

APICIUS.

You're eating, sir!

TRANQUILLIUS.

Sir!

APICIUS.

At the Emperor's board; be off!

TRANQUILLIUS.

Be off! You heard the order and you are not gone.

APICIUS.

I heard the order and I am not gone; what order, clown?

TRANQUILLIUS.

The order was to take up arms against the traitors in the street.

APICIUS.

Eh!

TRANQUILLIUS.

What arms do I see you take up?

APICIUS.

I?

TRANQUILLIUS.

Aye!

APICIUS

I'm not a soldier.

TRANQUILLIUS.

What then might you be?

APICIUS.

I'll have you know that I am something better; a civilian, sir!

TRANQUILLIUS.

The Emperor desires the best of help;
Civilians are particularly charged to take up arms.

APICIUS.

Eh!

TRANQUILLIUS.

And speedily; be off!

APICIUS.

I've not the bearing of a military man;
I fear I might be in the way.

TRANQUILLIUS.

The enemy's way, no doubt;
A position of great usefulness, you'd stop a dozen spears.

APICIUS.

I?

TRANQUILLIUS.

Aye!

APICIUS.

Say that you've not seen me;
For I fear my health will not permit the sacrifice;
However much it might be to my taste.

He gives TRANQUILLIUS money and is about to go, when MONIDES enters, upper left, carrying a crow impaled on an arrow.

What 's this?

MONIDES.

My master sent me word
That you should have the game I killed today.
My luck was bad and this was all I shot. *He offers the crow.*

TRANQUILLIUS.

Oh this will suit your taste, oh! oh!

Enter PLINY, JUVENAL and TACITUS, upper right. They conceal themselves behind columns.

APICIUS.

How can I ever come to that?

TRANQUILLIUS.

Then lose your bet.

APICIUS. *He groans.*

Oh do me not this violence! My health will not permit;
Consider that!

TRANQUILLIUS. *He pretends to weep.*

We feel for you.

APICIUS.

I 'm sure of it,
And never was I cold when sympathy was shown.
Come, toss this thing away; here 's something to enjoy,
Two hundred new sestertii apiece. *They refuse.*
'T will buy at least a fourth your freedom, fool.
They accept. MONIDES throws the crow upper middle.
Diplomacy 's a noble art; it hath protected thee, good friend.
He caresses his abdomen.
A load is off my mind.
He sees that the crow is still in view.
Oh throw it out, entirely out!
TACITUS discovers himself to them.

TACITUS.

Diplomacy, Apicius, is a noble art.
PLINY appears.

PLINY.

The culinary arts are quite surpassed.
JUVENAL appears and picks up the crow.

JUVENAL.

Oh what a load is taken off thy mind.
Thou Monides; I took thee for an honest slave.

MONIDES.

And so I am. I knew that you were there
And so I made the trade.
I felt your presence as a faithful dog would do;
And so entrapped the fellow, here.

APICIUS.

Degraded villain! it was I who laid the plot,

Intending to inform your master of your base behavior.
I alone perceived that they were hidden there.

JUVENAL.

You felt our presence too, no doubt. *Exit MONIDES, upper left, hastily.*

APICIUS.

I knew.

JUVENAL.

We know you knew but how did you find out?

APICIUS.

Oh I found out.

JUVENAL.

Oh you found out,
But tell us now, what sense discovered us to you.

APICIUS.

My nose.

JUVENAL.

Thy nose?

APICIUS.

I smelt you, sirs.

JUVENAL.

A marvelous nose.

APICIUS.

Oh any nose would do for that. I'll eat the crow. *Exit, upper right.*

JUVENAL.

A thing like this would nearly cure Vespasian's pain.

PLINY.

Nay, Juvenal; the sickness now upon him is his last.

TACITUS.

I fear he 'll never get beyond the city's walls.

PLINY.

And forming mobs await his death in murderous expectancy.

TACITUS.

A civil war is bursting in its fury over Rome,
And Lust and Rapine loosen for their horrid work;
Our lives are menaced and our households stand
Unbarred against the sweeping throng!

PLINY.

The slender thread is not yet snapt,
And while the pulse of passion running high
Endangers peace and mocks authority,
If with persuasive eloquence in opposition we unite,
The misery of Rome may even yet be stayed.

JUVENAL.

I have a graver duty here to keep me for a time.

Exeunt PLINY and TACITUS, lower left.

The firſt ſolyloquie of Decimus Junius Juvenalys.

Poor, feathered blackness, limp and stale,
Thy life is ended, hope and fear are done;
Thy lusty throat no more shall split the air,
Thy mounting flight shall not again enthrall
The envious eyes of creeping men.
And thou wast hatched to point our joke.
Didst ever in thy bold and careless journeys
Dream they tended here?
Didst ever think that from thy fate
A melancholy moral would be drawn?
Old crow, you laugh at me;
I see a gleam of humor in that filmy eye.
Yea! yea! you 're wiser now than all mankind,
For which of us can surely say
That he 'll outlive his mortal frame,
Though which of us hath not that hope?
Old crow, you know;
But a manful price you 've paid to learn.

The sound of approaching soldiers is heard. JUVENAL looks out at the several entrances and seeing escape cut off, he conceals himself behind a curtain below middle right.

These implements of sacrifice! *He takes up a knife and a small axe*
Oh brother! brother! brother!
Let me live!
Oh let me live a little longer!
Just a day, an hour!
To kill me now without a moment's warning!
Thus to plunge me into darkness
Like a torch blown out at midnight by a gust of wind!
Oh give me, Casca, yet a little time;
A murderer was never hastened to his doom
With such devoted speed.

CASCA.

No murderer did e'er deserve thy swift destruction.
Could an hour avail you aught?

LIVIA.

Oh even be it spent within the shadow of eternity,
There still would be a little of life's sunshine left.
A thought, a dream, a hope might spring
That mercy driven from thy heart by superstition,
Would within that time return.
Why should I die?
What injury have I ever wrought,
To any creature on the earth, much less to thee.

CASCA.

The creatures of the earth condemn thee not;
The gods demand thy death.
Your foul desertion of the sacred fire of Vesta,
And your marriage 'gainst their laws have roused their anger,
And thy life must answer for thy crimes.

LIVIA.

A crime, my brother, was 't a crime
To leave that gloomy, cold, unnatural place?
The sacred fire! it flickers out a dozen times,
Where Romans hear of that calamity but once.
The gods, my brother!

Art thou still so much the child to bow to them?
If gods exist, through what protection have I lived so long?
If gods exist, why call they on a human instrument
When all the majesty of nature's anger
Waits upon their least command?
If gods exist, the confines of perdition hold them
When their tolerance and favor rest upon the deed of murder!
Casca, played we not together children?
Did you love me then?
Were children ever happier?
In the midst of our delights they took me to that temple,
Filled my mind with terrible forebodings of the fate I 'd meet
Did I infringe their rules and orders;
Stifled every pleasure, grimly bound me to their life;
And thus they consecrated me.
Oh Casca, thee I dreamed of then,
And in my heart the only light left was the memory
Of the pleasures we in lisping years enjoyed.
I learned the mockery of worship
And I longed for you to take me out; in vain;
The years slipped by; in vain!
Then Titus came and he I loved,
And he it was who dared
To take me from this sacred Vesta's temple.
Did my brother welcome me?
I found thee stern and cold and unforgiving.
Casca, search thy soul and know
Wherein the profit comes before you kill me.
Casca, is the old love dead?

CASCA.

I hoped that when my sister came to die,
She 'd die with dignity and not in tears.

LIVIA.

Thy treachery where loyalty should glory in his strength,
Thy cowardice and failure make me weep.

If Titus knew----

CASCA.

Reproach me not with Titus' name!
Read! read! in her handwriting, as I warned you, see!

LIVIA. *Without confidence.*

A forgery.

CASCA.

A forgery! and this, too, is a forgery.
And one shall cure the ills inflicted by the other.

LIVIA.

You are not reluctant.

CASCA.

Knowing thou art guilty, should I be reluctant?
Here in Cæsar's house, upon the scene of Nero's revels,
Here where Claudius died by poison,
Where Tiberius and Caligula did glory in debauchery,
Shall rise a grateful odor to the gods,
And these fair walls we 'll stain with smoky memories,
For here where all your crimes have been committed,
Shall their expiation be.

LIVIA. *Brokenly.*

Lift up thy axe and fell me,
Slash thy knife across my throat,
And rip my body up,
Tear out my entrails for thy omens;
Burn me piece by piece,
But know thou, Casca Lentullus,
An omen favorable or a sign auspicious
Thou shalt not discover in thy search;
I am unfitted for thy sacrifice. *JUVENAL tosses the crow out*
Now Casca! art thou satisfied the time is not yet come?
What priest in Rome would dare to offer up a victim
In the face of such a warning fallen from above?
This sacred bird, so pierced,

Portends disaster if this deed be executed now.

TRAJAN. *Upper right, within.*

I will not stand!.... What right have you to bar my way?
A guard! a guard! by whose authority?....
But I am Trajan, his superior in command.

Exit CASCA, upper right. JUVENAL reappears.

JUVENAL.

The fates are thine again!
Now hide thee down this passageway
And come not out until.... until
I strike the jar here, twice.

LIVIA.

If Titus calls?

JUVENAL.

Not even then!
I 'll find the truth about this forgery,
And if he 's innocent, his arm shall strike the blows;
Three times if it be he.

LIVIA.

The hole is deep, it yawns with mystery;
The steps are narrow, slippery and steep.

LIVIA descends into the opening behind the stylobate. JUVENAL extinguishes the fire and lounges against the lower right corner of the altar. CASCA reenters.

JUVENAL.

Friend Casca, how 's thy health today?

CASCA.

How came you here?

JUVENAL.

I first put this foot first,
Then this foot first, and so I came.
A remarkable proceeding was it not?
I think few men could do the thing as well as I,
For of my youth it took me seven years to learn.

CASCA.

I think few men can lie as well as thou;
And that 's a thing you never had to learn.

JUVENAL.

That capability is inborn in the human race.

CASCA.

You hid behind this curtain, sir!
What disposition have you made of Livia?
Speak or die the death!

JUVENAL.

Oh my dear boy! I 'll speak, of course. Pray, calm yourself;
I have no wish to die the death, nor live the death,
Nor have a thing on earth to do with your fine death.
By Jove, I wish that piece of shrouding cloth
Came not so swiftly from the looms of fate.
I hid, of course; you asked me how I came, I told you how,
But when, you did not seem to wish to know.

CASCA.

My sister Livia, where----

JUVENAL.

Translated.

CASCA.

Juvenal, speak the truth!

JUVENAL.

Translated, as I live;
She 's made a member with the supernatural powers above.
Before my terror stricken eyes I saw a spirit,
Clothed in white, descend,
And taking our sweet Livia by the hand;
Through the compluvium they soared,
And quickly vanished in the great blue vault.

He points into the air and they both look up.

CASCA.

And did the spirit 's face seem fierce or mild?

JUVENAL.

'T was mild to milkiness on her; on me it fiercely glared.

CASCA.

You lie, old reprobate!

JUVENAL.

And you lack dignity, my virtuous friend.

CASCA.

She 's hid about these entrances.
H[illegible] guards, draw in;
Let not a soul slip by you!
We will see if thou hast spoke the truth.

Guards appear at all the entrances.

JUVENAL.

The sole and only mistress of my tongue is lovely truth.

CASCA.

Here come two women, they may throw some light
Upon these mysteries. Withdraw! *Exeunt the soldiers, on the left.*

JUVENAL.

Investigate to suit yourself;
I 'll not remain to hear my word impugned.

Exit JUVENAL, lower right. Enter BERENICE, middle right, followed by NARCISSA.

BERENICE. *To CASCA.*

Translated! yea, translated!
Foolish boy, she 's in some passage!
You are standing o'er a stairway now. *He moves.*
Narcissa thinks you went too far.

CASCA.

You overheard?

NARCISSA.

Quite plainly,
But you put her far too much in terror.

CASCA.

It was necessary; saw you not the spy?

BERENICE.

You fooled him well.

NARCISSA.

She still believes you were in earnest.

CASCA.

You must go to her at once, induce her to come out;
I 'll hide her safely, till the danger 's past;
For I 've done all that Cæsar can demand;
As such an omen would delay the mightiest enterprise.

NARCISSA.

1633 I 'll lose myself and never find her.

BERENICE.

I will be your guide and when she 's found
My presence you need not betray;
She fears me----

NARCISSA.

So do I. You play with us.
Explain why you should have a good design,
And not an evil one.

BERENICE.

To gain your lover's friendship, then,
When he in favor basks again,
And Titus hath been cured of his delusion,
I will have an ally in my plea for pension.
I am growing old; my lengthening days
Require provision and support;
Of Cæsar I have asked a mountain
1647 That I may be favored with a hill.

NARCISSA.

If this proves not the truth, I 'll ask you why.

Exit NARCISSA, middle right.

BERENICE.

With Livia, your cowardice and failure make me weep;

Hath not the time for action come?
Be careful, Casca; here your danger lies;
Her heart is like a curdling milk
And sourly will she serve you in the end.

Exit BERENICE, middle right. Enter VARRO, lower left, with DEMETRIUS, GALLUS and GRACCUS.

VARRO.

The chief conspirators.

CASCA.

The fortunes of the hour
Have placed your lives in Cæsar's hands,
And painful shall you find his grasp.
The fate of Aulus, dead in yonder hall,
By Titus' order, but by my design,
For he had falsely promised your allegiance to me,
Must show you where you stand;
Without a hope--unless
You favor my ambition for imperial authority.

DEMETRIUS.

We will consider it. *They converse apart.*

GRACCUS.

What need of this?

GALLUS.

What better fortune could we wish,
He 's wealthy, young and popular,
The multitude will split their throats
When he's declared.

DEMETRIUS.

He may be seeking thus a further proof of guilt;
He may be faithful yet to Flavian rule.

GALLUS.

We 'll take an oath.

GRACCUS.

An oath is needless if he 's bent upon deceit,

And needless if we serve a common cause.

DEMETRIUS.

This brief consideration 's all that we require
To place our forces and our lives at your command.
The hour is full, we should not tarry if we'd reap its fruits.

CASCA.

Then each to his plotted work,
To meet at the foot of the hill,
Where I have sent my kinsmen and my friends.

DEMETRIUS.

A signal when to act should be agreed upon.

CASCA.

This ringing vase. I'll strike it twice to bring you up;
Three quick and heavy blows should Titus be destroyed.
Then loose the rabble on the Flavians' friends,
And ere the sun is set another dynasty shall rule in Rome.

Exeunt DEMETRIUS, GALLUS and GRACCUS, lower left; FABIO, middle left, and CASCA, upper left. DOMITIAN looks in, middle right. He enters, followed by KLABO and other slaves carrying immense bundles of manuscripts, which seem weighty. Other slaves with manuscripts enter and cross from time to time.

DOMITIAN.

Come; Klabo, come! we have no time to waste.
I fear some rude conspirator will seize our manuscripts.
We'll rest ourselves in distant safety till the storm is past,
When like an eagle to its prey
We'll sweep down on the upstart head
That arrogantly takes our father's crown.
It makes me laugh to see men storm at Fate,
To see their frantic efforts to attract her predetermined eye;
The fools, they would compel the hour,
But wise men, we will wait.

A quantity of gold spills from one of the manuscripts.

Thou careless dog, these manuscripts
Are not to be so violently thrown about!

The gold is recovered. Exeunt all, lower left.

TRAJAN. *Within.*

Oh Casca! Casca Lentullus!

Enter TITUS and GAUDENTIUS, lower right, disguised as old men. Enter TRAJAN and JUVENAL, upper right.

JUVENAL.

Good friends, have you seen Casca Lentullus about?

TRAJAN.

Oh Juvenal, that such an upright man,
From noble parents sprung,
Should thus forget his loyalty,
His reputation, honor, prospects, all,
To sink to plots and subterfuges
Worthy of an outcast or a slave!

JUVENAL.

With more than your reluctance, Trajan,
Was I made acquainted with his perfidy.

TITUS.

You speak of Casca Lentullus?

JUVENAL.

Can this be Titus?

TRAJAN.

Wearing a plebian's gown.

TITUS.

Friends it is I.

JUVENAL.

Is Cæsar come to this?
Doth he discard his dignity so lightly.

TRAJAN.

Had his friends been called upon and shirked the duty,
Then he might have reason thus to masquerade.

TITUS.

It doth become you little to reproach a man,
Distract by his intolerable anxiety.

JUVENAL.

Doth it become a Roman,

Thus to lose his judgement in a sea of grief?

TITUS.

A sea of doubt but not of grief.
You spoke of Casca Lentullus?....
Is 't honorable in you to know an enemy of mine,
And then refuse his name?

TRAJAN.

I do not think he is an enemy of yours.

TITUS.

You spoke of Casca. Is it he?

JUVENAL.

It is, unless---

TITUS.

Unless!

JUVENAL.

You signed this tablet knowingly.

TITUS.

I signed a tablet but I trusted him and did not read it.
Are you sure?

JUVENAL.

The boy is maddened by ambition, see---

TITUS.

No! No! I will not read it!

JUVENAL.

You must not destroy him now.

TITUS.

Destroy him now! I could embrace him,
I could shake him thus for joy! *He shakes JUVENAL.*
Destroy the youth! Would you destroy
The giver of all happiness?
Oh, like a father's to the erring prodigal,
My heart goes out to him!

No name in Rome could fall more sweetly on my ears
To be thus coupled with an accusation.
Anger would have kindled in my breast
Had any other man presumed so much,
And in my strength I would have smote him down,
But Casca! Casca! glorious traitor!
Thou hast paid for all thy deeds with this defection.
No! No! I will not read it!
I must find my wife! Gaudentius, come, come, come!
By no good fortune has she gotten back?

JUVENAL.

He straightens his shoulders.

She has returned.

He avoids TITUS' grasp.

TITUS.

Where is she now?

JUVENAL points to the jar, into which TITUS thrusts his arm, whereupon JUVENAL, by a gesture, has him strike it three blows with the flat of his sword. LIVIA enters from behind the stylobate. She hesitates but recognizes TITUS in his disguise and they embrace. Cries are heard in the distance. Exit JUVENAL, upper right and TRAJAN, upper left. The cries continue, drawing nearer. They reenter.

JUVENAL.

Ah Titus, save your love thoughts for a timelier hour;
A threatening mob is loose and soldiers make up part of it.

TRAJAN.

Bestow your wife here in the passageway again,
Resume your habit and come forth;
Your father's throne is shaken on its eminence.

TITUS.

My friends exaggerate the danger.
Hath the shallow sounds of idle boys,
The power to fill your hearts with dread?

TRAJAN.

These sounds are deep, they come from desperate men,
For all the traitors down on Aulus' list
Are now allied with Casca.
When they find you in plebian garb,
Unarmed and unaccompanied,

You will answer for your folly with your life.

TITUS.

Then out among the crowds with legionaries, Trajan!
Use what measures seem expedient
Against the threatening hour.
You, Juvenal, with Tacitus and Pliny too,
I ask your eloquence in smoothing down
The ruffling temper of the streets.

Exit TRAJAN, upper left.

LIVIA.

'Tis safe for me within the hole?

JUVENAL.

And come not out till Danger flaps
Her ominous wings in other skies.

Exit LIVIA, after embracing TITUS.

And Titus, should you fall into the hands of hostile guards,
On no account make known your name
For it will surely prove the warrant of your death.

Exit JUVENAL, lower right. Enter BERENICE, middle right.

TITUS.

The cries are growing bolder,
Make yourself secure within the stone.

GAUDENTIUS.

When you are safe.

TITUS.

My safety, what is that to thee?

GAUDENTIUS.

Art thou not Cæsar, owe I not allegiance to the lord of Rome?

TITUS.

You did not always show this loyalty.

GAUDENTIUS.

I served a higher master, and
I did not know you as I know you now.
In this brief time, amid the shock of circumstance,
The noble metal of your character rings true and strong;

In serving you I serve the King of Kings
As best he may be served by me;
And if this prove thy hour of need,
My strength is thine. *Enter VARRO, on the right, with soldiers.*

VARRO.

Detain the two old men; forbid the mob!
Enter SEXTUS, on the left, with soldiers.
With me you are for Casca?

SEXTUS.

I will serve him well. *Aside.* I'll serve him well.

VARRO.

What enemies of his have you brought in?

SEXTUS.

I've caught Gaudentius' wife and with her some young babe.

TITUS. *To GAUDENTIUS.*

Your wife took Livia's child? *He assents.*

VARRO.

Where found you them?

SEXTUS.

In Pliny's house.

VARRO.

In Pliny's house! Why entering his door
I found the Empress Livia herself.
Oh Pliny hath his polished way with womankind;
I'll warrant he 'll not be forgot when times are good again.

TITUS' jealousy is roused again. GAUDENTIUS has been taken to the left. BERENICE comes forward.

BERENICE.

Nor even yet while times are bad will precious Pliny be forgot.
Stay Varro, with your men stand off a little while.
Proud Cæsar, now the scale
Of Justice tilts against your tyranny,
A moment since I stood a suppliant;
You turned your shoulder to my tears;
But now your life hangs on my word

And when I call the soldiers back,
They 'll lead you off to death.

TITUS.

Then call them back.

BERENICE.

Still scornful, still as proud as in thy might.
And so I 'd have the man I love,
For I have never ceased to love thee, Titus,
Never thought of any other---

TITUS.

1818 Well! well!

BERENICE.

I have grim news, oh Titus!
Grim, knee shaking news for thee;
Thy friends have all gone o'er to Casca's side,
And he, by acclamation, now is emperor, succeeding you.
His deep designs include your death
And Livia's sacrifice; and Numa's death,
When he finds out you have an heir.
Both I and Livia's friend Narcissa,
We have helped him in his schemes
1828 And now we have you in our power.

TITUS.

I still have friends, and strength.

BERENICE.

But not to rescue thee from Casca's toils.
The palace fills with partisans of his;
This wife, though she escape him once,
Will now be offered up a sacrifice,
While on a spear your head
With set and glassy eyes will bob alike,
To friends once faithful and to foes victorious.
1837 I love you still, let me prove traitor to his cause,
And you will be Augustus;

Promise me that you will love me as of old,
And I will get you through his lines
And lay a dagger in his sides to silence him.
But I must have your love.
Deliver up this faithless wife;
The child you may retain.
I offer you my love and Rome.

TITUS.

The soldiers.

BERENICE.

Varro! *He advances.*

TITUS.

Soldiers, take me where you will,
This woman here is done with me.

SEXTUS has MARTHA brought in, at the left. She is carrying NUMA.

BERENICE.

To death with him! And send that woman, too.

Exeunt VARRO, TITUS, GAUDENTIUS and certain of the soldiers, upper left.

SEXTUS.

Though Varro takes thy orders, thrust them not on me.

BERENICE.

Delay my pleasure at your peril, sir!

Exeunt, lower left, all except BERENICE. She knocks on the floor near the stylobate and conceals herself on the left. NARCISSA and LIVIA enter from behind the stylobate. The cries continue.

LIVIA.

The cries! the cries! They battle in the street!
The mob will sweep the palace for they win the day.

NARCISSA.

No! no! this is not war; 'tis but a tumult
Titus hath himself stirred up,
To justify his monstrous judgement 'gainst yourself.

LIVIA.

Why should my husband have to justify himself for any deed?

NARCISSA.

You questioned him when he would bring the Jewess back.

LIVIA.

Ah that 's a plot of Casca's, Titus sent her off.

NARCISSA.

Perhaps he did. Entrust yourself to Casca,
Dread your husband till the doubt is cleared away.

LIVIA.

Go bring my husband, and my brother, too,
By seeing them together I may learn the truth.
Exit NARCISSA, middle right.
The cries! the cries! Oh where is Numa in this turmoil?
Is he safe, or even yet alive?
Oh have I merited these charging woes?
Oh Numa! Numa! *Enter MARTHA, with NUMA, lower left, followed by SEXTUS.*
Martha! he 's asleep! asleep, oh gentle softness.
Rest, my Numa, rest and dream of love and happiness.
Oh exquisite, most marvelous little being, *She takes the child.*
Mine! mine, mine again to love!
You 've brought him safely back.

MARTHA.

But not to safety; I am taken by the soldiers,
Brought against my will. *SEXTUS and BERENICE move forward.*

LIVIA.

Centurion Sextus brought you back?
I 've heard my husband speak of thee
In terms of highest praise; I thank thee much.

BERENICE.

You thank too soon for Sextus serves on Casca's side.

LIVIA.

On Casca's side?

BERENICE.

I do not gloss my hatred

With the loathsome pigments of hypocrisy;
From me you 'll have the biting truth:
Your brother covets the imperial purple,
He commands the hostile troops and rouses up the mob;
He thinks the gods will favor him if you are sacrificed.
And craftily he plotted to that end
While Titus still was powerful;
And though his courage failed,
His purpose still for satisfaction calls.
Your husband's love is always yours.

LIVIA.

I thank thee, woman, much for that.

BERENICE.

Again, you thank too soon,
For though he still is true, his power is gone,
And Casca's warrant for his death is given out.

LIVIA questions, and SEXTUS and MARTHA assent.

LIVIA.

Oh Sextus, you the valiant soldier,
Stand unharmed and he goes out to death!
The meshes of adversity, they sift our friends and few we hold.

BERENICE.

And fortunate you are, if tangling in the stinging threads,
Your life is not cut through.
When Casca comes again,
A victim to his superstitious rage you fall;
I hate you but I still have pity;
Go to him, resign your life, to save your son,
For if you do the boy shall safely grow in Martha's care;
Delay and take his life,
As you do murder those despairing wretches in the streets,
By hiding here.

LIVIA.

The cries! the cries!
Oh fearful hour that makes my happiness

The instrument of death;
That drives me to the final brink,
Amid the mortal sounds of battle's violence!
Have mercy, oh you dreadful arbiters!
Numa! Numa! guard him well,
And from the other shore I'll intercede for you.

She is about to go out, upper left, when CASCA enters, lower right, accompanied by soldiers.

CASCA.

Wait! wait! thou 'rt caught at last!

BERENICE.

We have persuaded her that it is best
To give herself to thee.

CASCA.

Most timely hath she been persuaded,
When the last escape is closed.

BERENICE.

Your star is rising, Casca; you'll remember me?

CASCA.

My gratitude shall be proportioned to your own deserts.

BERENICE.

Then know that Titus is your prisoner;
That Varro just now led him off,
Gaudentius is the other; both are in disguise.
This information clears your way of every obstacle.

CASCA.

Have Varro bring his prisoners back.

BERENICE to directs and two soldiers go out, upper left.

Withdraw! forbid the entrance here of any one;
Heed not what passes in this hall!

Exeunt all except CASCA and LIVIA, BERENICE and MARTHA going out upper right. CASCA replenishes the smouldering fire which has been growing from the embers left by JUVENAL.

LIVIA.

I see into the depths of thy remorseless heart;
I know the full design of thy far reaching perfidy;

But happily I know that Casca's hand
And Casca's superstition murder me,
And not my husband's. Fate,
Through some mischance, hath given thee the power
To put in execution thy fell purposes;
But Casca, now I warn thee,
Stay the course of thy unbridled passion,
Lest upon the summit of thy greatness and thy might,
The force of thy tempestuous rise,
Shall fling thee o'er the peak,
Into the stony lap of waiting death.

CASCA.

The altar is made ready.

LIVIA.

Strike! *A cry comes from the infant, within.*

CASCA.

Return! return! *The several persons reenter.*
What noise was that?

SEXTUS.

We do not know.

The infant, in MARTHA'S arms, cries again. HYPOKRATES enters, lower right.

CASCA.

Whose child is this? You will not tell? *To the women.*
Hypokrates, whose child is this?

HYPOKRATES.

My art is so bound up in divination of momentous deeds
That I have time for no such trifles, sire, as this;
I paint huge pictures, not small signs.

CASCA.

But if this child is proven Livia's, will the gods be pleased
To have me offer it and spare its mother?

HYPOKRATES takes two doves from his breast.

HYPOKRATES.

Sire, the omens are most favorable to this procedure.

Offer up the infant, then await a further portent
For the mother's disposition, which I think will be,
The way to please the gods the best of all.

BERENICE moves away.

CASCA.

Stay Berenice, tell me one thing more, whose child is this?

BERENICE.

I'm done! Unfortunate hour that claimed the noble Aulus!
Opportunity a second time, intrudes upon thy dreams;
Unwelcome visitor! unready host!
Irresolution, thou art doomed to failure!
Heavily the gates of Rome shall close upon me,
Wearisome the journey hence. *BERENICE goes out, lower right.*

CASCA.

Whose child is this? You will not tell?

He takes the infant from MARTHA and at his motion a soldier is about to plunge a knife through her hand:

LIVIA.

The child is mine.

MARTHA.

She seeks to shield me from your anger,
I'll admit the child is mine.

LIVIA.

The child is truly mine.

CASCA.

The thing is well supplied with mothers now.
I must find out whose child it is. *Both try to take it.*
Your wagging tongues may lie but on my honor
Here is testimony not to be denied.

With a sudden motion he tears open LIVIA'S dress, striking her bosom.

This withered hag, let her be crucified for her deceit.
Give me this mooted babe! *SEXTUS has been holding it.*
Hypokrates, we'll offer up this infant in the public view,
And then the woman, thus to finally appease
The great displeasure of the gods.
Let her be crucified!

LIVIA.

How fearful is this penalty!
How slight the provocation!
Casca, wait, consider---

CASCA.

Let the woman die!

LIVIA.

Oh pitiless and wanton arbiter!
What ruin shall appal thee?
What extremity of desolation shall appease thy appetite?
What punishment can Fate apportion to thy infamy?

MARTHA.

God's will is manifest in every word and deed,
In nature's every act; would you implore the flood,
Or bear resentment 'gainst the shrivelling flame?
His hidden purposes they mutely serve;
His will is not opposed by thy command.
My life is freely His.

Exit MARTHA in custody, upper left.

LIVIA.

Casca! Casca! Casca! give me back the boy,
Oh spare his innocence and I will build the altar up again,
I'll fan the flame and plead with you to hurry through the rites;
I'll turn the knife upon myself,
And as you search me for the omens,
I will beg the gods to bless you with their favors.
Casca! let me kiss him once, once more, my little Numa!

The soldiers hold LIVIA. Exit CASCA, lower right, with the infant; HYPOKRATES and some of the soldiers following. The soldiers remaining arrange themselves about the several entrances.

Oh Numa! Numa! Numa! *NARCISSA enters, lower right.*

Narcissa!

NARCISSA.

Kill me Livia! end remorse!
Oh let me feel that I have answered
For the sorrows I have heaped upon you, love.

LIVIA.

Are you to blame?

NARCISSA.

I have betrayed you,
Brought you from the safe recesses of the passageways.

LIVIA.

They 've taken Numa for a sacrifice.

NARCISSA.

He 's gone to lift the child upon a spear,
To show the mob how he 's appeased the gods.
I thought when I persuaded you, it was for safety's sake,
For Casca made most honied promises,
And swore with many an oath that his anxiety for you
Was caused by love and hope of safety for you both.
Give me the knife!
And let me drown remorse
With blood in retribution shed!
Oh let me teach this monster how
To follow in the paths of treachery!
Oh let me teach him how revenge
Is fathered by injustice,
How destruction from destruction gathers power,
How deceit brings forth deceit,
And desolation answers desolation's call.

Exit NARCISSA, lower right. Enter, upper left, VARRO and soldiers, with TITUS and GAUDENTIUS. LIVIA, before the impluvium, is weeping.

GAUDENTIUS.

Take comfort; Martha saw us as she passed,
And she goes bravely to her great reward.

Enter SEXTUS and two soldiers, lower right.

VARRO.

Who knows the emperor's commands?

SEXTUS.

The emperor direct
That one of these your prisoners be executed,
While the other one goes free; the woman,

She shall be delivered to the populace,
And burned for their amusement.
Titus is the prisoner to die, Gaudentius is to live.
The emperor directs that you acknowledge his command.

VARRO.

Is one of them the Flavian prince?
Go Quintus, tell the emperor I have his wish,
And it shall be my deed. *A soldier goes out, lower right.*
But these are bearded men.

SEXTUS.

Oh that need not delay the execution of the guilty one.
He pulls off their beards.

VARRO.

But which is Titus?

SEXTUS.

You should know.

VARRO.

I don't see how? Gaudentius' name I never heard before,
And I am newly come to Rome.

SEXTUS.

But you and I have fought in Titus' ranks,
And we should know our old commander's face.
Methinks that this is Titus.

VARRO.

No! no, this is he!

SEXTUS.

You are mistaken,
This is Titus; know I not that brow?
SEXTUS and TITUS are on the left. SEXTUS purposely contends that GAUDENTIUS is TITUS.

VARRO.

And know I not these heavy jaws?

SEXTUS.

You but a moment since declared you could not tell.

VARRO.
But that 's too old a man.

SEXTUS.
Nay, Titus, sir, is thirty nine.

VARRO.
Let 's kill them both and thus make sure.

SEXTUS.
Make sure we would of execution for ourselves.
Gaudentius is the architect, he builds the Colosseum, yonder;
Casca would make little bits of us if we harmed him.

VARRO.
We might delay until---

SEXTUS.
His orders were explicit;
When he spoke he struck his hand.

VARRO.
Stay! Livia is Titus' wife, and she shall tell us.
Woman! Guards, make ready!
Woman, you will now go forth to death;
So kiss your husband, say farewell,
And waste no time in tears.

LIVIA.
I thank you. Titus.
He turns from her.
Titus!
He pushes her away.
Titus, in the hour of death
You turn away, you push me off,
Tear out the very tendrils of affection,
Let me fall to wither and consume,
To vanish like a broken vine upon the flame.
Oh Titus, have I lost your love?

The soldiers take her out, upper right. TITUS turns, after she is gone. JUVENAL enters, middle right, and stands, in speculation. The soldiers gather near the centre.

TITUS.
I am ready, sirs, to die.

GAUDENTIUS.

Nay, I am Titus; I will not allow
This man to sacrifice himself when I care naught for life.

VARRO.

The woman told us, as I thought she 'd do.

SEXTUS.

Oh simple Varro, she had heard our argument; she kissed the man who's not her husband. so, to now outwit her, we must kill the other one.

VARRO.

Oh simple Sextus, thinking to outwit a woman's wit! She knew we'd say that we must kill the other one, and so she kissed her husband, knowing that we would destroy the other one; and therefore we must kill the one she kissed.

SEXTUS.

Oh much more simple Varro, she did know that after we had said: "She kissed the man who's not her husband," we'd reflect that she had truly kissed her husband, thus to put us off the trail. She knew we then would see her subtlety, and so to get the better of us when we had, she kissed the one who's not her husband; now, to finally come out ahead, it doth behoove us to despatch the other one.

VARRO.

Oh Sextus! Sextus! see you not that she knew we would know all this, and knowing we would know that she knew we would know, she knew we'd know.... Sextus, which of us can be the greater fool?

SEXTUS.

Undoubtedly yourself.

VARRO.

Nay! nay! she kissed her husband, since she knows she is to live. With Titus dead, her path to Pliny's house will be much straiter than it is just now.

SEXTUS.

Ah Varro, knowing we knew this, she kissed Gaudentius, thinking we would think that if she kissed her husband truly, we would think her subtle, and awkwardly destroy her husband's counterpart. It doth behoove us much to let our wishes flow with hers and kill the other man.

VARRO.

Ah ha! I have thee Sextus, now! A moment since you said she wished her husband spared, and therefore did just what she did; and now you say in wishing Titus dead, she did just what she did; which latter thing is just exactly what she did in scheming for his preservation. How then can you say that she would act the same, from reasons so opposed.

SEXTUS.

Ah ha! I have thee Sextus, now! Why you yourself at first declared she kissed her husband to deceive us, then you said she kissed him so that we would not be fooled and now you turn on me with triumph in your eye for saying she would act the same from different motives when your own assertions of equivalent effect are scarcely cold upon your lips.

VARRO.

2121 I give a woman up.

SEXTUS.

There's nothing else for any man to do.

VARRO.

We have not carried out his orders yet.

SEXTUS.

We'll toss a coin and let the fates decide.

VARRO.

I hear you talk.

SEXTUS.

If heads, this man is Titus,

Tails, and this man here is not friend Titus.

He first points to GAUDENTIUS, then to TITUS. VARRO does not notice the quibble.

Heads! So this is Titus!

VARRO.

Destiny hath shortened thy allotted span,
But happily for thee her call comes not before thy readiness.

At his motion the soldiers gather about GAUDENTIUS and presently leave him dead upon the couch.

Let us announce the news that Casca now
Holds undisputed sway, that all the Flavians are dead.

Exeunt VARRO and soldiers, upper right.

SEXTUS.

Ah Titus! *His courage ebbs.*

TITUS.

Thou art now a Roman general.

SEXTUS.

If Casca wins?

TITUS.

No! Sextus, n o! That shall he never do!
Give me your armor and your sword,
And tremble not, that failure was at hand;
The gods did put you here to meet this danger,
Knowing you alone could face the peril of the hour.
But Sextus, there are legions full of younger brothers
To yourself, beyond the gates of Rome, and in Rome, too,
And we shall show this boy how wars are waged,
And battles won and lost!
Go down into the streets and guide the cohorts of my friends;
For Trajan now must have the city guard well on the way.
With this brave armor buckled on, each finger feels a legion;
Single handed I could meet a company,
And with ten such men as Sextus
I could overcome an army
Of the traitors Casca leads!

Exeunt TITUS and SEXTUS, upper right and upper left. JUVENAL approaches the body of GAUDENTIUS.

The second soliloquie of Decimus Junius Juvenalys.

Good friend of Rome, thou too, hast paid
The final penalty; thy life hath answered
To the stern demands of circumstance;
Levelled by the great equation down with
Nero's dust and these fast stiffening wings,
No better now, no worse than they;
Three grains of sand upon the fearful stretches
Of eternity. Oh worthy man, who stood a hero but
A moment gone, who lies neglected now forevermore,
Could those dull eyes flash forth a fire,
Could those set lips give out a cry,
My friend, what wouldst thou say?
Wouldst thou not rue the impulse
Which hath brought thee down?
The foolish thought that sacrifice
Had knocked upon thy door?
The foolish dream that men would care?
The world heeds not, nor hath a feeling left,
For those who fall. It holds no helping hand
Out to the swimmer spent, it lifts
No crushing burden from the sinking back, nor speeds
The feeble youth upon his unaccustomed way.
It eats your soul and roughly throws the husk aside,
It knows not you have lived and cares not you have die
A turmoil; hateful, noisy;
Flies a buzzing in their busy orbits,
Ceasing not, insensate, merciless.
Oh costly dead, these fretful miseries thou hast
Left behind; I see thee on a splendid summit,
Far above the trivial doings of the multitude,
The meaningless and vapid circles of the senseless crow

JUVENAL has thrown a robe over the body. A noise, within increasing. Exit JUVENAL, lower right. Enter a mob, w LIVIA, upper left, followed by VARRO and a few idle soldie

The FIRST PLEBIAN. *(A young man.)*

2183 Here! here! we'll burn her here!

The SECOND PLEBIAN. *(An older man.)*

So bind her quick and bring,
Dry boughs from far and near.

The THIRD PLEBIAN. *(An aged man.)*

Pile up the wood, a ring!
Oh what a lovely sight,
To see her body, white,
Grow black with fire and sear!
And sear! and sear! and sear!

His voice is shrill and his speeches end with a shriek.

The FIRST PLEBIAN.

Tear off her rags, her rags!

She has been bound to the lower left post of the impluvium. They pull her sleeves off and tear her clothing where it is not protected by the ropes.

The SECOND PLEBIAN.

2192 Oh give me here a stick,
To draw the rope, it sags.

The THIRD PLEBIAN.

Oh bring a torch, quick, quick!
For ere the brewing storm,
With clouds hath time to form,
She dies the death of hags,
Of hags! of hags! of hags!

The FIRST PLEBIAN.

Bring on more pine and oak!

VARRO.

Take care, this hall with fire
You 'll stain, and black with smoke.

The SECOND PLEBIAN.

2202 Herein shall be her pyre,
This post her monument.

The THIRD PLEBIAN.

To hell she shall be sent,
And in the smoke she 'll choke;
And choke! and choke! and choke!

The FIRST PLEBIAN.

She killed her babe, her own.

The SECOND PLEBIAN.

And broke her sacred oath;
So let her moan and moan.

The THIRD PLEBIAN.

She 'll answer now for both!
The torch! the torch! the torch!
Oh let her scorch and scorch,
And cry aloud and groan,
And groan! and groan! and groan!

Enter TITUS, upper left

TITUS.

Away! away! away! ye fools and madmen!
Stand, yea stand, and meet
The fierce displeasure of the emperor!
Vespasian lives and Titus was not slain;
Here from the portico you see them sweeping up the hill.
The upstart Casca, like a dog, lies dying in the sun.
Away! away! to meet and honor their return!

The mob goes out, upper left

LIVIA.

Oh let us seek the shelter of our friends.

TITUS.

Doth safety lie in Pliny's house?

LIVIA.

I fear the mob's return.

TITUS.

Unfaithful woman, well you may,
For when it comes again,
It comes in anger to destroy us both;

And welcome shall its fury be.

Enter NARCISSA, middle right.

NARCISSA.

Why stay you here? The mob comes back!
The trick was worthy of a fruitful mind and well it worked;
But now you idly stand and let these moments,
Gifted with long years slip by!
Think you no more of life, nor of revenge?
For Casca hath accomplished his design,
And on a spear I saw the infant borne.

TITUS.

My son hath been discovered?

NARCISSA.

Yea, and murdered!

TITUS.

Woman! could you not have spared the boy?
Was't not enough to plot against the peace of Rome?
Against my father's life? Against my honor?
Was it not enough to leave thy husband's house?

NARCISSA.

Stop! stop! a monster, thou,
To hold suspicion up to her,
To virtue's last embodiment.

TITUS.

Her last indeed, for with this failure,
Virtue's inconceivable attempt to form a woman
With her own perfections, in despair is given up.

LIVIA.

Oh Titus, thus you hold me in your high regard,
And thus you cast reproach when I am guiltless, love.

NARCISSA.

Escape! escape! the mob returns!
I see the distant dust of friendly hoofs,
A moment's safety and the danger's past!

TITUS.

You see the distant dust of friendly hoofs indeed,
For swiftly do they fly from Rome.
The day is lost, my love is bitten and my courage gone;
The growing noises of the vengeful mob,
Fall sweetly on my ears;
They promise much. *Enter SEXTUS, VARRO and the mob, on the left.*

The FIRST PLEBIAN.

2259 He 's here upon the spot!

They bind TITUS to the lower right impluvium post. SEXTUS forces TITUS' helmet down over his face, thus concealing his identity from the mob.

The SECOND PLEBIAN.

The lying knave, I think
We 'll send him on a trot---

The THIRD PLEBIAN.

With her to hell to stink,
And writhe and curse, so haste,
And give them here a taste,
Of fire, and smoke that 's hot!
That 's hot! that 's hot! that 's hot!

Enter CASCA, accompanied by soldiers, lower right.

VARRO.

Most august emperor, give us leave
To burn these two together, here.

CASCA.

We 'll watch the sport ourselves.

NARCISSA.

2270 Oh Casca, are the gods not satisfied?

A noise of distant hoofbeats, within.

VARRO.

What noise is that?

CASCA.

The thunder rolls, proceed!
The rain will quench your fire.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

VARRO.

Pile up the wood and bring a torch!

NARCISSA.

You promised me.

VARRO.

Methinks I hear that noise again.

Enter JUVENAL, upper right.

JUVENAL.

And so you do!
Ten cohorts of the faithful horse,
Come coursing down the Appian way!
Now Casca, call thy traitors to thy aid,
For in this hour you face destruction and defeat.
The loyal troops are sweeping home! *He waves his robe.*

CASCA.

Bring up the legions, let the first three turn the flank,
And trap this group of horsemen in the street.

Exeunt several soldiers

JUVENAL.

Oh Casca, bid your men desist! Rush not to death,
But make your peace with Titus while you can.

CASCA.

Old dotard, you endanger life, with such advice.

JUVENAL.

Think not to frighten me, young Casca;
Know that Stoics such as I,
Fear not the gods themselves, much less the puny man,
Who hath no stronger threat to make than merely death.

TRAJAN enters, upper right, followed by many soldiers

TRAJAN.

Stand! Casca Lentullus;
In Cæsar's name I take thee into custody;
Release his wife and offer no resistance,
At the peril of thy life.

CASCA.

And have you warrant, Trajan, to arrest a legion?

TRAJAN.

Ten of them, if they have proved themselves
Unworthy of the honor Rome bestows upon their heads,
In making them her warriors.

CASCA.

You say you have authority from Titus?

TRAJAN.

Aye, and from Vespasian, too.

CASCA.

Then is your warrant void;
For I, by right of arms, am now become
Secundus Casca Lentullus Augustus, Emperor of Rome,
And all commands and orders relative to Rome,
And to the government of all the world,
Must eminate from me, and no one else.
Send back your men from Rome,
The proclamation hath been made,
That Casca now is emperor;
For Titus Flavius lies
In yonder sand pit, dead.

SEXTUS.

Wait! Casca! wait! what man is this,
If he be not the noble Titus Flavius, sirs?

SEXTUS discloses TITUS' face. They fall back. A silence ensues.

TRAJAN.

How have you dared this ignominious usage?

VARRO is about to apply the torch

SEXTUS.

Varro, when hath Titus been unjust to you?
Doth he deserve this death, that you should
With such haste apply the torch?

VARRO.

Why Sextus, you did just now gamble with me for his life.

SEXTUS.

I tricked you then and saved him,
For I played the traitor's part but lived it not;
And you have told your friend that Titus hath been killed,
But now he sees that Titus lives, and when he's dead,
What will protect poor Varro from
This new made god's revenge?
Desert the traitor!
Call upon your friends and Titus will forgive. *A silence.*

CASCA.

You see that Varro is a man of wisdom, do you not?
He hath no liking for a sinking ship;
Nor none of you, methinks, are Titus' friends;
You fear the fellow.

TRAJAN.

Insolence!

TITUS.

Subdue your swords my friends, I wish to die.

TRAJAN.

Then let us die together fighting, as all Roman soldiers should.

TITUS.

I wish my friends to live.

CASCA.

And Titus, I, in memory of old favors done,
Will give them all an opportunity:
Lay down your arms and call me emperor,
And you shall live in peace.

TRAJAN.

Doth this include Vespasian and the greedy son, Domitian,
Just now fled with half the gold in Rome? *He draws his sword.*

TITUS.

Stay Trajan, seek not with such fervent deeds,
To bind yourself to me; I wish to die,
And Casca now hath made an offer,

Which I hope my friends will not reject.
Lucretius, thou whose brother led
A desperate charge against Jerusalem;
Sextus, thou whose brother died
A soldier's death within those well defended walls:
You seasoned veterans,
Who have tramped with me in many a hard campaign,
If I have left a vestige of my former power,
I here command you, friends and comrades all,
To live and hinder not
The death of him whose part is played.

VARRO.

A horseman comes!

TRAJAN.

We'll let him come and let him go; another step!

VARRO does not light the fyre.

JUVENAL.

Why Titus, must you waste your life?
You owe a higher debt to Rome than to your own desires.

Enter TACITUS, middle right, unobtrusively.

TRAJAN.

Think not, because the weak Prætorian Guards
Have proven false, that all the armies
Of the empire have become his friends!

TACITUS.

Is this the emperor?

SEXTUS.

He hath commanded us to let him die;
He thinks he serves his country best by leaving it.

TRAJAN.

The fifteenth and the fifth,
Why they would gladly die for him!
The Gallic, Cythian, Celtic and Illyrian legions,
All are yours; the Pontic troops,
The Dacian and Germanic veterans, faithful to a man!
Have you no news to alter his determination?

Speak!

SEXTUS.

Withhold thy news no longer.

TRAJAN.

Speak.

TACITUS.

It chokes me quite when added to it
I find Titus bound.

JUVENAL.

He's bound to die.

TACITUS.

Old jester, some day you will crack
The last lash of your scornful whip;
This hour we lay aside our jokes and bow our heads,
For one who's laughed at many a point of thine;
Go to him now, recall thy keenest thrust,
And in thy choicest vein retell the tale,
And see if thou canst move to smiles those setting lips.
Oh Titus, gird your courage up!
Your father, good Vespasian, 's dead in his Sabine home at last.
Arriving there, he took his bed, received his officers,
Attended to the business left; and sinking back,
He felt the chill of dissolution in his veins;
Then, rising up, he called his friends, and with these words:
"A Roman emperor should die erect,"
Your noble father's spirit passed away.

TRAJAN.

Now Titus, you are emperor!
Your word is universal law.

CASCA.

Apply the torch!

NARCISSA.

Oh Casca! wait!

Hath Titus here not shown himself a worthy Roman?
He hath offered you his life to save his friends,
When, as the lightning rives the oak,
A word would split your green conspiracy.
But you can prove yourself possessed of more
Than even his nobility;
Acknowledge his supremacy again,
And by this restoration of his power and dignity,
You 'll gain the blessings of your countrymen,
The long respect of coming ages;
You will overtop his fame for all eternity;
And history shall not forget the splendid gift. *CASCA laughs.*
Remember then the many promises you 've made to me,
And look upon your sister and repent your deeds in time.
He strikes her.

CASCA.

Away! away! *Enter HYPOKRATES, lower right.*

HYPOKRATES.

I will see Casca Lentullus!
Good emperor, stop this burning here!

CASCA.

Our will depends no more on mystic and capricious augury;
The weight of our displeasure soon shall fall
Upon the foolish mortals who opposed our rise;
Include yourself among the doomed, by further prophecy.

HYPOKRATES.

Desist! desist! these sacred birds have twice refused to eat!

CASCA.

There flows the tawny Tiber;
Break their wings and throw them in,
For since they will not eat why let them drink.
With shouts of derision HYPOKRATES is pushed out. NARCISSA obtains a sword from SEXTUS.
And throw the rascal in to keep them company;
For thus I cast away all supernatural aids!
I fear no more the gods!
The world is mine!

NARCISSA.

Then Casca, ruling all, be merciful.

He pushes her roughly away. She stabs him as he turns to light the fire. His sword being in his hand he kills her, and at his motion the soldiers carry her body out, lower left. The torch, fallen from his hand, has gone out. He stands as if uninjured.

TACITUS.

She loved thee once, she loved thee Casca, once.

CASCA reels slightly.

SEXTUS.

Oh Varro! Varro! friend, complete the work!

CASCA recovers himself and a silence ensues. He reels and falls to his knees but rises with the extinguished torch in his hands, having dropped his sword.

CASCA.

A torch! a torch! *He sees that none can be had.*

A torch! no! no!

Not all the gods shall choke me down!

Blood issues from his mouth. He stabs at TITUS with the torch but VARRO thrusts him through from the side and his partisans rush on his sinking form and kill him.

A GENERAL CRY.

Titus! Titus Augustus! Emperor!

The cry is repeated in the street. The ropes are cut LUCIA embraces LIVIA. TITUS advances and stills them with a gesture.

The acceſsion of Titus Flavius Sabinus Veſpaſianus.

Since it hath pleased the gods to call us on
The scene again, our duty now shall best be done,
By coaxing back the frightened wings of peace,
With every means that shall expedient seem:
Another bosom, Trajan, should be searched. *A soldier ... amines C... CA'S dr...*
Take up the dead; show honors to them both;
The one deserves the plaudits of the world,
And poorly will they pay him for his sacrifice;
The other needs whatever shows in charity
May be accorded him. Recover all the dead,
Who in this needless hour have been mowed down;
With garlands deck the woman just now carried off.
Recover, too, the body of an infant borne upon a spea...
Have messengers sent out to overtake the news,
Lest all the country be in tumult thrown;
Recall our brother, praising his economy and thrift.
To warn all men against the evils of unchecked ambitio...
We shall think it best, in justice to the state,
To utterly destroy the last of these disturbing elemen...
Who sought to rise upon her desolation,
Who would thriftily have followed in the wake of ruin...
Fattening on misfortune and distress.
And therefore, in the name of lasting peace,
To sink the admonition deep, proceed now
To the consummation of our disregarded orders,
Adding to imprisonment, the immediate execution
Of these known and listed traitors, further,
Confiscate their properties and add their monies
To the public treasury, impoverish
Their sons and daughters so that no descendant,
Puffed with wealth and idleness,
Shall e'er be tempted to avenge this proper sentence.
Execute them all!

He strikes the paper which TRAJAN has had the soldier take fr... CASCA'S breast. The mob disperses and the soldiers, under ... command of SEXTUS and VARRO retire in order. TIT... and the others move away, except LUCIA, who goes out, lea... left. LIVIA is left alone.

JUVENAL.

The empress, sire!

TITUS.

We have no empress, Juvenal,
We take our place upon the throne, unhonored by a wife.

LIVIA.

Now Titus is my heart made sick,
I love you still, my love hath never lessened
Since the fortunate hour your unexpected presence
Waked my heart to happiness immeasurable.
Forget, my husband, these quick, hateful words,
Hot sprung from jealous doubt and anger;
Take me in thy arms again.

TITUS.

Let Pliny's name be added to the list.

TITUS writes PLINY'S name upon the list with his finger moistened in the blood stains of the parchment. Exeunt all, upper right, except LIVIA.

LIVIA.

No wrong! no wrong! I've ever done
To suffer such dishonor.
Nothing! nothing! rests against my soul,
To justify the shame,
Which in his wilful anger now he casts upon my love.
Yea Casca, thou I should have listened to;
The Hebrew woman hath returned at last.

After a silence LUCIA enters, lower left.

LUCIA.

I've brought you Numa's gown.

LIVIA.

Take me to the place!

LUCIA.

There's nothing left to see;
The dogs have torn his little body---

LIVIA.

Lucia! Lucia! come!

The guards are stationed in the halls;
They will not let you out.

LIVIA.

Come! come!

A guard momentarily appears, lower left.

2491 A prison, now! Oh Numa! Numa! Numa.

She sinks down on the stone seat of the impluvium. LUCIA takes off a white robe and throws it over her. She rises and draws it about herself. She picks at the hem of NUMA'S garment and her mind wanders.

A pretty hem, the little flowers scatter here and there. Reward the girl. I'll have another gown embroidered soon if this one pleases him. I see his precious fingers pulling at the blossoms. Are you sure the colors will not fade? He'll have it in his mouth, you know. *She takes the robe in her arms.* How light you are! You should be growing fat; these chilly days were never meant for thee; bright sunshine, warm and strengthening will suit thee best. Asleep, asleep my little one, oh lie thee here while mother watches for.....thy sleeve!.... Thy gown is bloodstained!... Lucia! look! the sleeve is gone.

She has spread the garment upon the couch at the left of the impluvium. She clutches at the white gown, but it has fallen from her shoulders as she has risen on the discovery of the bloodstains. At the sight of the black dress her reason returns.

He's dead! he's dead! he's dead!
And this is all they've left me, Numa, Numa.
Go, go! Lucia! go, bring back a witness of the deed.
His father's men are searching for him now.

Exit LUCIA, middle left. Presently enter HYPOKRATES, dripping, lower left.

Hypokrates, you saw the deed.

HYPOKRATES.

The deed?

LIVIA.

The infant's death.

HYPOKRATES.

2509 Ah yes.

LIVIA.

The dogs!

HYPOKRATES.

The form was rescued by a clownish knave,

And tossed into the Tiber after me;
With me it sank, but me the gods preserved.

LIVIA.

A useful purpose you will answer still;
I have an enemy beyond my strength,
And you have mortal poison.

HYPOKRATES.

No, not I, for that 's against the statute;
But, I have a little powder ring,
Though not a poison.

LIVIA.

Yet, 'twill do,

HYPOKRATES.

'Tis nothing but a sleeping potion, lady.

LIVIA.

Sleep they long?

HYPOKRATES.

At times, they do; an hour, a day, a month,
A year, a century; according to the dose.
Shall we exchange our rings?

LIVIA.

How much is here?

HYPOKRATES.

About three hundred years, I think,
Perhaps a little more.

LIVIA.

Well met.

HYPOKRATES.

And well imbursed.

LIVIA.

Have you a remedy for this?

HYPOKRATES.

I might procure one for you.

LIVIA.

No! do not! I want relief cut off;
Procure the remedy for no one! here! *She gives him another ring.*

HYPOKRATES.

It shall be so, I serve my clients with an honor
Even Pliny well might envy me.

He goes down right. LUCIA and TRANQUILLIUS enter, middle left.

LUCIA.

Tranquillius saw thy Numa rescued from the dogs,
And carried off by some rough fellow in plebian garb.

LIVIA.

Go tell the emperor.

Exit TRANQUILLIUS, middle right. LUCIA looks from LIVIA to HYPOKRATES. LIVIA, searching, presently picks up a horn and filling it with water at the impluvium, she retires to the stylobate.

LUCIA.

Hypokrates, she hath thy poison, thou her ring.
Tranquillius, return!

She catches HYPOKRATES by the arm and TRANQUILLIUS reenters.

Hypokrates hath sold the empress poison;
In her grief she will destroy herself.

TRANQUILLIUS.

Pestiferous astrologer!

HYPOKRATES.

'Twas not a poison,
Nothing more than just a bringer of sweet, restful sleep.

TRANQUILLIUS.

Our ears have heard strange stories of thy sleeping potions;
Thou shalt stand convicted when I crook my finger, sir.

HYPOKRATES.

A simple sleeping-drug.

TRANQUILLIUS.

A sleep that knows no ending;
I can see the prison gates swing ope their massive jaws for thee.

HYPOKRATES.

I have a remedy. Now let me go. The pungent odor of this root will drive away a sleep brought on by drugs. I thought to bring her back to life myself and gain the credit of the prodigy, but you shall do it for me, gentle sir. *Exit, lower right.*

TRANQUILLIUS.

He smells the root and displays great repugnance.

I can not blame poor Death for making off when he smells this.

He catches LUCIA around the waist and forces her to smell the root. He kisses her.

LUCIA.

She comes! we'll hide and when she falls asleep we'll waken her.

TRANQUILLIUS.

Ah no! we'll let her sleep awhile,
For when she wakes and finds her purpose foiled,
She'll take some surer means.
Events must dictate our responsibility.

LUCIA.

But do not wait too long.

TRANQUILLIUS.

The proper hour shall be the proper time.

LUCIA.

But if it does not work?
Perhaps the root hath not the power to overcome the drug

TRANQUILLIUS.

We have his word.

LUCIA

He feared arrest.

TRANQUILLIUS.

He lied! he lied! he gave us this that he might get away!
The empress we can not awake.

LUCIA.

We must prevent----

TRANQUILLIUS. *Catching her.*

Too late! she's drained the cup.

LUCIA

Then let us get the emperor's physicians.

TRANQUILLIUS.

If we do and they revive her she will find another way.

LUCIA.

He may have spoke the truth; the odor may awaken her.

TRANQUILLIUS.

2575 Yea! methinks it will. *He smells it again.*

LUCIA.

Ah no! her face is white.

TRANQUILLIUS.

I have not told the emperor yet. *Exeunt both, upper right.*

LIVIA.

It is the end.
The pleasures I have known are gone,
The happy hours have trooped away,
And sombre griefs and bitter miseries consume the day.
I go to meet the ones I love. *Her hand trembles.*
It works! It works! I see as in a dream.
The night is falling; Titus! Titus. *She sinks down on the couch.*
Happy were we once, oh come again, again.

She rises with great effort and weakly strikes the jar three times with the horn clutched in her hand. She falls back upon the couch. Enter JUVENAL, TRANQUILLIUS and LUCIA, upper right.

JUVENAL.

She hath destroyed herself!

LUCIA puts her robe over LIVIA. TRAJAN enters, upper right.

TRAJAN.

2587 The emperor sits without a wife indeed.

Enter TITUS, TACITUS, JULIA and PLOTINA, upper right.

TITUS.

Who struck the jar? We heard it ring. Our wife!

JUVENAL.

Thy wife is dead.

JULIA and PLOTINA stand at the head of the couch, weeping.

TITUS.

How came she to her death?

JUVENAL.

She hath the look of poison, sire.

TRAJAN.

I saw Hypokrates----

TITUS.

Go bring him here!

TRANQUILLIUS.

He's there.

Exit TRAJAN, lower right.

TITUS.

Though we regret her death,
The circumstances move us to the utterance,
That she hath nobly answered for ignoble practices;
We pity her but she hath merited her woe.

HYPOKRATES and TRAJAN reenter.

TACITUS.

Astrologer, here lies the evidence of thy unlawful traffic!

HYPOKRATES.

It was not a mortal drug I sold!
She said she had an enemy.
I have a cure! *He searches.*
I have it not, but I can get it, sir!

TRAJAN.

I will accompany you.

HYPOKRATES.

'Tis utterly impossible
For me to get the remedy unless I am alone.

TACITUS.

Then go alone.

TRAJAN.

This is a trick of his to slip away.

TITUS.

We rest upon his honor; go.

TRANQUILLIUS. *Aside, to HYPOKRATES.*

The emperor desired her death;
Escape, and come not back.

TRAJAN.

Hypokrates, obtain the remedy,
Or mix thyself a fatal drug, if you like not a sword.

Exit HYPOKRATES, lower right, shivering.

TITUS.

Inter the woman privately.

TACITUS.

Unnatural man!

JUVENAL.

You flout the living and insult the dead.

TRAJAN.

With this abuse of power shall you inaugurate your reign?

TITUS.

Sirs!

JUVENAL.

Though men may still before your anger,
Yet among themselves your actions will they narrowly examine.

TITUS.

All I ask is justice from the tongues of men.
By secret obsequies I would preserve her
From the shameful reputation of her life.

TACITUS.

It was yourself who took her from the temple.

TITUS.

Yea! and it was your good friend
Who took her from the palace.

JUVENAL.

This is why the name of Pliny stands

In bloody characters upon the list.

TACITUS.

A baseless accusation.

JUVENAL.

Pliny's name hath never yet been touched by scandal.

TRAJAN.

Pliny took the forum when the mob in lust and anger stormed;
His voice in your defence above the tumult rose,
He stood against the multitude,
He whipped them back to silence,
Cowed their rising fury,
And his eloquence, his great authority prevailed;
His arm upheld the tottering state.

Enter SEXTUS and PLINY, lower left.

SEXTUS.

The noble conduct of this prisoner,
His loyalty and reputation
Have prevailed upon me thus to bring him here,
Before he goes to prison, sire.

PLINY.

The empress, dead!

TACITUS.

Yea. Titus hath accused her of unfaithfulness,
And thus she answers him.

PLINY perceives that he is thought guilty

PLINY.

Am I the man?
Unjust and violent decree!
How shalt thou e're repair this injury?
Upon what evidence have you proceeded to this monstrous end?

TITUS.

Sufficient for myself.

TACITUS.

Produce thy evidence!

PLINY.

We quarrel in the presence of the dead.

The soldiers remove the couch with LIVIA'S form. Exeunt LUCIA, PLOTINA, JULIA and SEXTUS, upper right.

TITUS.

She plotted with her brother and thyself.
She fled to thee when Casca was prepared to take our life.

TACITUS.

Infatuated man, her brother thought
To gain the favor of the gods by sacrificing her;
He told her you loved Berenice,
Thus to get her from the palace.

TITUS.

But she fled to Pliny's house.

JUVENAL.

Because Gaudentius was his guest;
Two days before, and I should now be taken prisoner
For I have had the man with me:
With confidence he moved along
The difficult and envious pathway of his art.

TITUS.

Gaudentius was your guest?

PLINY.

His instruments are there, his children, too.

TITUS.

They shall be sons of Rome.

TACITUS.

Then this is all thy evidence.
She had no thought of Pliny when she went to Pliny's house.

TITUS.

Her Christian declaration----

JUVENAL.

Was a falsehood,
Prompted by the scheming Aulus in the hope

That Casca in his sacrificial fury
Would encounter your authority.
They poisoned Livia's mind,
They told her you had sentenced her to death,
That only by this subterfuge could she escape;
And Casca showed her this.

TITUS.

In Berenice's hand!
An order for her death; the signature my own!
Accurséd Casca; lost! lost! lost!
O'ertake Hypokrates!
Oh any treasure if he finds the remedy!

TITUS moves upper right, but stops. TRANQUILLIUS, at the top of his speed, runs across from the left and leaping the stylobate disappears, upper right. TRAJAN goes out hurriedly, lower right.

No! no! I'm sure she was not guiltless, no!
You sympathize with her and hope to clear your friend.
Her brother, though he wished to sacrifice her,
Why should he dishonor her?
'Tis hateful to suppose him base without a reason.

PLINY.

A weighty reason moved him, sire;
He thought to bring my death about,
To strike at me with your despair,
For I had threatened to disclose his schemes to you;
If he proceeded with them, which I would have done
Had he not acted on the impulse of the moment.
This conspicacy was organized by Aulus;
Casca, through a chance, took up the work
Where Aulus laid it down; his own conspiracy,
In greater caution planned he never carried through.

JUVENAL.

And never will.

TITUS.

Yea! yea! you seem to be as full of truth as he;
I think you are as false.

TACITUS.

Conviction is upon you for

You know we speak the truth;
No longer can you justify your harshness
With the certainty of guilt;
Admit responsibility, endure remorse,
And seek to raise no barrier of suspicion up,
To hide away from poignant sorrow and disquietude.

TITUS.

No! no! for you yourself did copy his incriminating speech,
And when you read the lines to us and reached
The dangerous phrase, in friendship you refused the rest.

TACITUS.

Is this the last? With this shall your suspicions end?
Read then, you know the art.

TACITUS takes the tablet from the ledge and TITUS reads it.

TITUS.

"Oh! Casca, look! Oh, look where Livia comes!
The charm of dignity in every movement lies,
She hath the fascination of immortal loveliness.
How like a gentle breath she moves along the corridor.
How like a dream her presence makes
The cold and gloomy hallways of this palace seem.
She, Casca, is thy sister"----

TACITUS.

There I stopped.

TITUS.

"She, Casca, is thy sister,
Hers the eyes to blind with tears and burn,
And hers the voice to choke with grief,
And hers the heart to crush beneath thy ruthless heel,
When thou shalt kill Vespasian on his throne,
And lay the noble Titus in his undeserved tomb!"

TACITUS.

I stopped, to save him from disgrace and ruin;
Peace, I thought, would best be served by silence.

PLINY.

We expected to dissuade him from his fateful course.

TITUS.

Your hopes and expectations feebly stood
Against this devastating storm.

TACITUS.

2732 Its fury now is past.

TITUS.

Its havoc wrought!
And reparation shall not build these ruins up again,
Nor shall remorse bring back the dead.

TACITUS and JUVENAL, standing on the right, grasp TITUS' hand and walk apart. TITUS extends his hand to PLINY, who then joins TACITUS and JUVENAL, upper left. TITUS is facing the right and does not notice that they have moved away. He reads the tablet again.

"Oh! Casca, look! Oh, look where Livia comes!

Unseen by TITUS, LIVIA appears, upper right. LUCIA is with her and TRANQUILLIUS closely follows them.

The charm of dignity in every movement lies,
She hath the fascination of immortal loveliness.
How like a gentle breath she moves along the corridor.
How like a dream her presence makes

LIVIA reaches the right side of the impluvium.

The cold and gloomy hallways of this palace seem.

With the first line he looks up.

2742 lynes.* Oh look where Livia comes.

They embrace.

TRANQUILLIUS, at the left of the impluvium, discovers on the floor the cake which he has coveted and brushing it off, he goes to LUCIA, embraces her and gives her a portion of it. The others observe the groups from the stylobate.

(*CURTAIN.*)

*Theſe 2742 lynes contayn as many fyllables as are contayned in 2616 lynes of the claſsical iambic pentametre.

THE CONCLUSION.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY,
BERKELEY

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW

Books not returned on time are subject to a fine of 50c per volume after the third day overdue, increasing to $1.00 per volume after the sixth day. Books not in demand may be renewed if application is made before expiration of loan period.

MAY 11 1932

75m 8,'81

YD 26611

743436

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY